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LIFE

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT.

BY

EARL STANHOPE,

AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE PEACE OF UTRECHT.

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On the 4th of December the Parliament met in most anxious expectation. Mr. Pitt in the one House and Lord Camden in the other laid upon the Table the Report of the Examinations before the Privy Council, and moved that it should be taken into consideration on the 8th. At the same time the Prime Minister gave notice that he should propose the appointment of a Committee to search for precedents. Mr. Fox suggested a doubt (as Mr. Vyner had before him) whether it was quite consistent with the dignity of Parliament to make a Report from the Privy Council the groundwork of their proceedings on a question of such extreme im-

portance. Pitt declared that he was anxious to afford the most ample information, but pointed out that the Privy Council could take evidence upon oath, which a Committee of the Commons could not.

Meanwhile it had become apparent to the small circle of the King's confidential servants, that, eminent as were the physicians in attendance, they had up to this time altogether failed in effecting any mitigation of his symptoms. Might not greater benefit follow from the treatment of some one who had more specially applied himself to the cure of mental maladies? Foremost among such practitioners in public fame stood Dr. Francis Willis, a clergyman and Rector of Wapping. By a somewhat unusual combination of duties he had during twenty-eight years kept an asylum for insane persons at his residence in Lincolnshire. His name was first brought forward by Mrs. Harcourt, the wife of one of the Equerries, General afterwards Earl Harcourt. She drew up a paper stating her knowledge of his merit from his successful treatment of her mother. On the 28th of November this paper being laid before the Prince, the Duke of York, the Chancellor, and Pitt, it was determined that Willis should be sent for.[1] Accordingly he was summoned by express to Kew. He came accompanied by his two sons, one of whom, Dr. John Willis, was a professed physician; and on the 5th of December he had his first interview with the Royal sufferer.

From the first, Dr. Willis formed a highly favourable opinion of the case. "Had I been consulted in the

[1] Diary of Mrs. Harcourt, as cited by Mr. Massey in his History of England, vol. iii. pp. 376 and 386.

first instance," he frankly said, "His Majesty's illness would have been of very short duration." He adopted at once a different course of treatment. He laid aside all false pretences, all petty vexations, all unnecessary restraints. He thought that in this case no violence need be apprehended, and that no suspicion should be shown. The King had been denied a razor at his toilet, and a knife and fork at his table. These were at once restored to him, and in Dr. Willis's presence were freely used. The good effects of this altered treatment speedily appeared. As yet the delusions continued unabated, but far greater calmness and composure, as also better health, were attained.

Under these circumstances both the Queen and Mr. Pitt were disposed to place great confidence in Dr. Willis. He was considered as mainly responsible for the conduct of the case. Taking up his residence with his sons in the palace at Kew, he had the constant care of the King's person, while the other physicians only paid their visits by rotation and at stated times.

On the 8th, at the next meeting of the House, Pitt adverted to the suggestion which had been made of appointing a Parliamentary Committee to examine the physicians, and declared himself willing to accede to it, observing that there was now a stronger reason for it than at the last debate, since some new physicians had been recently called in. Accordingly there was named, with general assent, a Committee of twenty-one, comprising the most distinguished Members from both sides. A similar motion was made and carried in the Lords, and each Committee completed its examinations in a

single day. All the physicians, in their evidence, agreed that there were good hopes of the King's recovery, but that no probable period for it could be named. Yet the degree of these hopes was not the same in all, and here again party spirit crept in. Dr. Warren was closely connected with Fox and Fox's friends, and it was observed that his prognostics were far less sanguine than those of Dr. Willis. Thus the names of these two physicians became, as it were, watch-words on each side; the Ministerial party relying on the special experience of Willis, while the Opposition party might allege the high authority of Warren.

On the 10th of December Mr. Pitt presented to the House the Report of these examinations, and observed that the King's present incapacity for business having now been ascertained by a Committee of their own Members, he should proceed according to his notice, and move that another Committee be appointed to search for precedents. But at this point commenced the tug of war. Fox rose and objected to the proposed Committee, although he said he should not resist it. In effect he said, though not in intention, that Committee would be an utter waste of time. It was perfectly well known that there existed no precedent whatever which could bear upon the present case. But there was then a person in the kingdom different from any other person to whom existing precedents could refer—an Heir Apparent of full age, and capacity to exercise the Royal power. In his (Mr. Fox's) firm opinion His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales had as clear, as express a right to assume the reins of

Government, and exercise the powers of Sovereignty, during the illness and incapacity of the King, as in the case of His Majesty's natural demise. Such was his right, but His Royal Highness was not himself to judge when he was entitled to exercise it. The two Houses of Parliament, as the organs of the nation, were alone entitled to pronounce when the Prince ought to take possession of and exercise his right.

The views of Mr. Fox upon this question, as he thus unfolded them, seemed in striking contrast with the general tenor of his "Revolution politics." Here he was denying the supreme authority of the two Houses to deal as they thought fit with the eclipse of the Kingly power. He was asserting an inherent, and as it were Divine, right in the Prince of Wales. Thus he seemed to be treading in the footsteps of Filmer and Sancroft rather than of Somers and Burnet. Pitt, as he intently listened to Fox's enunciation of his principles, could scarcely, it is said, conceal his triumph at the indiscreet position which his rival had assumed. No sooner had the sentence which first announced it been concluded than Pitt, slapping his thigh triumphantly, turned round to the friend next him on the Treasury Bench, and whispered, "I'll *unwhig* the gentleman for the rest of his life"![2] He started up as soon as Fox sat down. The doctrine, he said, which the House had just heard was of itself, if any additional ground were necessary, the strongest and most unanswerable reason for ap-

[2] Related by Thomas Moore, who states that he received the story from an unquestionable source, and that its authenticity may be relied upon. (Memoirs of Sheridan, vol. ii. p. 38.)

pointing the Committee that he had proposed. If a claim of right was intimated, even though not formally, on the part of the Prince of Wales to assume the government, it became of the utmost consequence to ascertain from precedent and history whether there was any foundation for this claim, which, if established, must preclude the House from the possibility of all deliberation on the subject. In the mean time he must maintain, that to assert such a right in the Prince of Wales or any one else, independent of the decision of the two Houses, was little less than treason to the Constitution of the country. Unless by their decision, the Prince of Wales had no more right—speaking of strict right—to assume the government than any other individual subject of the realm. What Parliament ought to determine on this point was a question of discretion; and however strong the arguments might be on that ground in favour of the Prince of Wales, into which he would not enter at present, it did not affect the question of right.

Thus the gauntlet was fairly and on both sides cast down. The doctrine of Fox seemed to be received with much disfavour by the House, and Burke rose with generous warmth to support his friend; but he showed in this debate, as in several others on this Regency question, an intemperance and ill taste that were much deplored by his party at that period, as they must be to this day by all true admirers of his fame. Thus he went so far as to call Pitt "one of the Prince's competitors," and in another part of his speech he described him as "the Prince opposite." For the first of these expressions Burke was called to Order; for both

he was rebuked by Pitt in his reply. "I appeal to the House," said the Minister, "upon the decency of such a charge. At that period of our history, when our Constitution was settled on its present foundations, and when Mr. Somers and other great men declared that no person had a right to the Crown independent of the consent of the two Houses, would it have been thought either fair or decent for any Member of either House to have pronounced Mr. Somers a personal competitor of King William the Third?"

Thus appointed without a division, the Committee completed its business in a single sitting, and produced good store of precedents, though of limited application and of slight Constitutional value. The discussion on Fox's doctrine was renewed in divers forms and on several days, but the doctrine itself gained no ground in the House, and it excited great alarm throughout the country. The privilege claimed for the Heir Apparent was commonly regarded as both an invasion of popular rights and a dethronement, as it were, of the afflicted King. Fox found it necessary to explain, in the clearest terms, that he had spoken only of himself, without the authority of any person whatever, much less from the authority of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales; but yet the ill impression was by no means removed.

A lively comment on these debates may be gathered from the confidential correspondence of William Grenville:—"Only think of Fox's want of judgment to bring himself and his friends into such a scrape as he has done, by maintaining a doctrine of higher Tory principle than could have been found anywhere since Sir

Robert Sawyer's speeches!..... Fox found that by what he had said before, he had offended so many people, that he was obliged to take the very first moment of explaining it away. After this recantation was over, the day was closed by such a blunder of Sheridan's as I never knew any man of the meanest talent guilty of before. During the whole time that I have sat in Parliament—a pretty warm time—I never remember such an uproar as was raised by his threatening us with 'the danger of provoking the Prince to assert his right,' which were the exact words he used. You may conceive what advantage all this gives us, especially when coupled with the strong hopes entertained of the King's recovery."[3]

In the Lords a motion for a similar Committee of Precedents was made on the 11th of December. Then the views which Fox had put forth the day before were controverted by Lord Camden and defended by Lord Loughborough. The Chancellor delivered himself of a temporising speech, as though not yet fixed in his opinion. But he began to fear that he might be a loser instead of gainer by his projected act of treachery. The reports of Dr. Willis were in due course submitted to him. He might observe that day by day they expressed a confident hope of the King's recovery. He might observe that on the 13th the Queen and the Princesses, whom the King had not seen since the 5th of the last month, were brought

[3] Letters to Lord Buckingham, Dec. 11 and 13, 1788, as published in the Courts and Cabinets of George III.

into his presence without danger. He seized Her Majesty's hand, kissed it, and held it in his during the whole interview, which lasted half an hour. The little Princess Amelia, who from her infancy had been his favourite child, sat upon his lap.[4]

The Chancellor felt that he could temporise no longer without great risk to his own position. With the new hopes of the King's recovery which Dr. Willis gave, he determined to take a bolder course on the next occasion in the House of Lords. That next occasion came on the 15th of December. Then the Duke of York made a good and sensible speech (his first in Parliament), disavowing most expressly in his brother's name any claim not derived from the will of the people. The Chancellor upon this left the Woolsack and addressed the House. He began by expressing his great satisfaction that no claim of right was to be raised by the Prince of Wales. But as he next proceeded to the afflicted condition of the King, his emotion seemed to grow uncontrollable, his voice faltered, and he burst into a flood of tears. Recovering himself, he declared his fixed and unalterable resolution to stand by a Sovereign who, during a reign of twenty-seven years, had proved his sacred regard to the principles which seated his family upon the Throne. Their first duty, he said, was to preserve the rights of that Sovereign entire, so that, when God should permit him to recover, he might not find

[4] Locker MSS., as cited by Mr. Massey in his History of England, vol. iii. p. 387.

himself in a worse situation than before his illness. The Chancellor dwelt on his own feelings of grief and gratitude, and wrought himself up at last to these celebrated words: "and when I forget my King, may my God forget me!"

It seems scarcely possible to exaggerate the strong impression which this half sentence made. Within the House itself the effect was not perhaps so satisfactory Wilkes, who was standing under the Throne, eyed the Chancellor askance, and muttered, "God forget you! He will see you d—— first!" Burke at the same moment exclaimed, with equal wit and with no profaneness, "The best thing that can happen to you!" Pitt also was on the steps of the Throne. On Lord Thurlow's imprecation he is said to have rushed out of the House, exclaiming several times, "Oh, what a rascal!"[5]

But in the country at large the intrigues of Thurlow were not known: they were not even suspected. He was looked upon as the fearless assertor of his Sovereign's rights—as a strictly honest man, prepared, if need should be, to suffer for his honesty; and the impressive half sentence which he had just pronounced fell in exactly with the current of popular feeling at the time. The words flew from mouth to mouth. They were seen far and wide in England, printed around portraits and wreaths, embossed on snuff-boxes, or embroidered on pocket-books. It can scarcely be

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[5] Locker MSS., cited in the History of England by W. Massey, Esq., vol. iii. p. 488.

doubted that in the Parliamentary conflict they became a valuable auxiliary on the Minister's side.

Meanwhile, in the House of Commons Pitt was steadily pursuing the course on which he had from the first determined. On the 16th he brought forward three Resolutions; the first a formal one, declaring the fact of the King's illness, and the second asserting in the clearest terms that it was both the right and duty of the two Houses to provide the means of supplying the defect in the Royal authority. For this purpose—so said the third Resolution—it was necessary that the two Houses should determine the means of giving the Royal Assent to such a Bill of Regency as they were about to pass. Being called upon to state what was meant by this last Resolution, Pitt explained that the Chancellor should be empowered by a joint vote of both Houses to put the Great Seal to a Commission for giving the Royal Assent to the intended Bill. This device—or this "Phantom," as the Opposition called it—to use the Great Seal without the King's authority, and to give the Royal Assent without the Royal knowledge, was no doubt a strange anomaly; yet it is hard to say, under such unprecedented difficulties, what lesser anomaly or what better expedient could have been devised.

It was against the second and essential Resolution, containing the pith of the scheme, that the main Opposition stand was made. We find, as we might expect, some complaints of "rats" in the Ministerial correspondence of that time. The chiefs of Opposition had whispered that the reign of George the

Third was now, in fact, at an end, and the Prince had condescended to assume the part of a canvasser for votes. He wrote himself to the Earl of Lonsdale, soliciting as a personal favour his aid on this occasion. The Earl issued his mandate accordingly, and "Lord Lonsdale's people," as Mr. Grenville terms them[6]—that is, the Members whom he nominated, declared themselves, reluctantly perhaps, against the Government.

In this debate, on the 16th of December, Lord North spoke against the Government proposal with great temper and great ability. Fox also, though labouring under severe indisposition, put forth his admirable powers. "One of the best speeches I ever heard from him," writes Mr. Grenville the next day. That great speech may, however, be justly charged with indiscretion; for in one passage Fox bitterly inveighed against his rival, alleging that Pitt would never have proposed any limitation on the Prince's power, had he not been conscious that he did not deserve the Prince's confidence, and would not be the Prince's Minister. But this unworthy taunt exposed him—and perhaps not him alone—to a most severe reply. "I declare," said Pitt, "the attack which the Right Hon. gentleman has just now made to be unfounded, arrogant, and presumptuous. As to my being conscious that I do not deserve the favour of the Prince, I can only say that I know but one way in which I or any man could deserve it—by having

[6] Letter to Lord Buckingham, December 17, 1788.

uniformly endeavoured in a public situation to do my duty to the King his father, and to the country at large. If, in thus endeavouring to deserve the confidence of the Prince, it should appear that I, in fact, have lost it, however painful and mortifying that circumstance may be to me, and from whatever cause it may proceed, I may indeed regret it, but I will boldly say it is impossible I should ever repent of it."

Of this reply from Pitt, Grenville says next day to his brother, "I never heard a finer burst of eloquence, nor witnessed such an impression as it produced." That impression was indeed perceptible in the division which ensued. Then, in spite of all the efforts of all the Prince's party, the second Resolution was affirmed by 268 votes against 204. "The division exceeded our expectations," writes Grenville. "All the neutrals, and many of the wavering people, and some of the most timid of our friends were against us."

The Resolution was again debated, but with no different issue, in its further stages. It is painful on one of these occasions to view so mighty an intellect as Burke's expose itself by its bursts of passion to the contempt of far inferior minds. Even Sir William Young, a Buckinghamshire Member altogether unknown to fame, could speak of him in one debate as "Folly personified." Burke had so far forgot himself as to compare the Chancellor to one of the least decent of the Pagan deities, and to draw a caricature description of his face. "It is intended," he said, "as I

have heard, to set up a man with black brows and a large wig; he is the fit person; trust none of the Royal family: he will be a kind of scarecrow to the two Houses; he is to give a fictitious assent in the King's name, and this is to be binding on the people! I do not approve of any robbery, whether house-breaking, highway robbery, or any other; yet each of them in my opinion is more excusable than this."

In writing to Lord Buckingham, Sir William Young goes on to say of Burke that "he finished his wild speech in a manner next to madness." Burke was then inveighing against the supposed intention to restrain the Regent from any grant of peerages. "It is not very decorous," he cried. "Suppose, for instance, the Prince wished to bestow honours on the house of Cavendish, would any person in this House have the audacity to dispute the propriety of such an honour? Or, suppose His Royal Highness should be disposed to revive the title of Rockingham——." Strange that so profound a reasoner did not perceive that here he was striking a wrong chord! Strange that he could expect any public sympathy to this mere personal grievance! Strange that he should not anticipate the philosophic resignation with which the country would be disposed to bear the calamity that some months or some years must elapse before fresh honours could be heaped on one or other of the Great Whig Houses! Stranger still that he failed to see around him the anxiety of his own friends to restrain him, and the eagerness, as we find it recorded, of his opponents to cheer him onwards as hoping to

hear from his loquacity the entire list of the intended Peers! A perfect hurricane of tumult was raised by such contending emotions, and to this, in nearly his concluding sentence, Burke referred. "In vociferation and noise," he cried, "some persons are very great, but I know a set of hounds that would eclipse them."

The three Resolutions of Pitt being carried through the House of Commons, were next sent up for the concurrence of the House of Lords. The debate upon them stood fixed for the 26th of December. Up almost to that time Lord Thurlow does not seem to have wholly lost the hope of making some terms with the Prince; but on Christmas Day he sought a secret interview with Fox, and expressed his desire that the negotiation between them might be considered at an end. As Fox next day reports the matter to Lord Loughborough: "It was much the pleasantest conversation I have had with him for many years. Upon the business of our interview he was perfectly open and explicit, and dismissed the subject as soon as possible with perfect good humour, in order to talk upon general ones in our old manner of conversing. He was in a talkative vein, and France, Spain, Hastings, Demosthenes, and Cicero were all talked over as if between two friends who had neither political contention nor enmity."[7]

The Chancellor being thus set free from his late en-

[7] See Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. vi. p. 206.

tanglement, took a decided part in the impending debate, and gave battle with great force to Lord Loughborough. In vain did Lord Rawdon, as a personal adherent of the Prince, interpose with an amendment tending to avoid a decision on the abstract point of right; the original Resolutions were affirmed by 99 Peers against 66.

By these votes of the Commons and the Lords the ground was cleared for Pitt's proposal with respect to the Regency Bill, a proposal hitherto kept secret, and indeed not yet fully matured. But during the interval he received a most signal token of the public esteem and approbation.

It was well known by the public that Pitt would not be continued one hour in office by the Regent. It was known that he had already taken measures for returning to his first profession. It was also known, perhaps, that his neglect of his private affairs had involved him in some debts, which he trusted to discharge by an industrious application of his talents at the Bar. At this very time, however, there was held, by public advertisement, a meeting of the principal bankers and moneyed men of London, anxious to tender him on his retirement from office a substantial mark of their esteem. The sum of 50,000*l.* was first proposed, but so great was the enthusiasm, that in the space of forty-eight hours this sum was doubled, and Mr. George Rose, as his Secretary of the Treasury, was requested to press upon him, in the manner most likely to be acceptable, a free gift of 100,000*l.* But Mr. Pitt answered his friend as fol-

lows: "No consideration upon earth shall ever induce me to accept it." [8]

Surely it was not without reason, nor merely from the warmth of private friendship, that we find William Grenville at almost the same date exclaim to his brother, "There certainly never was in this country at any period such a situation as Mr. Pitt's." [9]

As regarded the plan of the impending Regency, it was on full deliberation the judgment of the Minister that the care of the Royal Person, together with the direction and appointment of all offices in the Royal Household, should remain with the Queen; that the Prince of Wales, as Regent, should have no power to grant peerages except to his brothers on their attaining the age of twenty-one; that His Royal Highness should not be enabled to grant the real or personal property of the King, nor any office in reversion, nor for any other term than during His Majesty's pleasure any pension or any office whatsoever except such as must by law be granted for life, or during good behaviour. These restrictions, as Mr. Pitt explained, were all founded on the hope of the King's recovery at no distant period. But if unhappily the reverse should prove to be the case, it would, he said, be open hereafter to the wisdom of Parliament to reconsider the arrangement it had made.

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[8] Compare on this transaction the letter of Sir William Young to Lord Buckingham of December 23, 1788, with the statement of Mr. Rose in the House of Commons after Pitt's decease, February 3, 1806.

[9] See the Courts and Cabinets of George III., vol. ii. p. 81.

The first step of Mr. Pitt towards his Regency Bill was to announce its provisions in a letter to the Prince of Wales. This he did on the 30th of December. "My dear Lord," thus at once wrote the Prince to Loughborough, "I have just received a letter from the Minister with such restrictions as no Dictator could possibly, I think, ever have been barefaced enough to have brought forward. Pray come to Charles's as soon as you possibly can, to take these matters into consideration." Several other persons besides Fox and Loughborough were drawn by the Prince into council, and his reply to Pitt having been framed with great care, was on the 2nd of January, 1789, despatched in the name of His Royal Highness. This letter, which has been often printed, is certainly one of the best State-papers in the English language. Most stately and courteous in its tone, while most severe and searching in its comments, it comprises in its pregnant brevity all the arguments that could be urged against the Ministerial measure. This masterly performance came from the pen of Burke, and it may well enhance our just admiration of Burke's transcendent powers when we find him on so lofty an occasion enabled to adopt a wholly different style, lay aside his gorgeous imagery, and rise clear from those gusts of violence in which he had so recently indulged.

Two days afterwards Mr. Pitt, in the name of the whole Government, replied as follows to the Prince's letter:

"Whitehall, Jan. 5, 1789.

"The King's servants have received the paper which

your Royal Highness was pleased to communicate to them through the Lord Chancellor.

"They beg leave respectfully to assure your Royal Highness that if the plan which they took the liberty of submitting to your Royal Highness had appeared to them in the light in which they have the mortification to observe that it is considered by your Royal Highness, it would never have occurred to them to propose it. The King's servants, in forming this plan for the intermediate settlement which the present calamity requires, have had constantly in view that object of which your Royal Highness expresses the fullest approbation—restoring to the King, whenever His Majesty's health is sufficiently recovered, the personal exercise of that government which in right and law still resides with His Majesty, and also the providing in a competent manner for the intermediate preservation of that dignity which ought not to be separated from the Royal Person. In this view, while they considered the temporary exercise of the Royal authority on His Majesty's behalf and during His Majesty's illness as essentially different from the actual possession of the Crown, they have at the same time been anxious to extend that authority to every article which they could conceive essential or necessary for the temporary administration of the King's power. They have deeply to regret that a plan formed to the best of their judgment, for these purposes, should have appeared liable to the observations contained in the paper which your Royal Highness has been pleased to communicate. But as on the fullest deliberation they cannot but consider the principles of that plan as resulting from their indispensable duty to their Sovereign, and as there is no part of the subject on which your Royal Highness has intimated your pleasure for receiving any particular explanation, they find they shall not be

thought wanting in the respect which they owe, and which they must always be anxious to certify, to your Royal Highness, if they still feel themselves bound to adhere to these principles in the propositions to be offered to the consideration of Parliament."

On the same day as the date of the Prince's letter, the 2nd of January, and after a short illness, the Speaker, Mr. Cornwall, died. As might be expected from the state of parties, a contest ensued. The Government proposed Mr. Grenville, and the Opposition Sir Gilbert Elliot; but the former was elected by a large majority, 215 against 144. It was hoped, however, by the latter party that a new source of embarrassment to the Ministers had here arisen. The Duke of York, who in these transactions had taken part warmly with his elder brother, expressed in all companies his exultation that now the immediate appointment of a Regent was inevitable, since the new Speaker could not be confirmed without the Royal authority. But Pitt was not the man to be baffled by a mere obstacle of form. The new Speaker stated the case to the House for their instructions, and expressed his desire to follow the precedents of the Restoration and the Revolution, in neither of which cases was the Speaker presented for the Royal approval. The House acquiesced in this course, and the business of Parliament proceeded as before.

Next, however, there came another obstruction from the proposal which Fox warmly pressed of a new Committee to examine the King's physicians. He hoped to elicit some later evidence unfavourable to the prospect of His Majesty's recovery, and therefore unfavourable

also to the restrictions proposed on His Royal Highness. Pitt granted the Committee, and it sat for a week. Dr. Willis, who appeared before it, underwent a long and bitter cross-examination by the Opposition chiefs, who could not forgive his sanguine hopes. With signal want of judgment they ventured on a scandalous and wholly unfounded insinuation, reflecting not only on himself, but on the Queen. They hinted, and the charge was re-echoed by the Opposition press, that the Queen and Dr. Willis were in collusion for the purpose of misrepresenting the health of the King, and of defeating the claims of the Prince. Such an allegation could only recoil upon its authors, as they speedily discovered by its effect upon the public out of doors.

When at last the Committee had given in its Report, not at all in the sense that Fox had expected, Pitt was able on the 16th of January to move five Resolutions embodying those restrictions on the Regency which he had announced in his letter to the Prince. In his opening speech he referred with just resentment to the calumnious insinuation which he had heard in the Committee up-stairs, and dared any one to bring it forward in a direct and tangible form. It was a charge of no common gravity on any physician that he should submit to be unduly influenced by a great personage, and consent to give an untrue account of His Majesty's health. It was a charge of no common gravity on an illustrious lady, "who had lived for almost thirty years in this country without blame of any kind, a pattern of domestic tenderness and virtue, against whom the breath of calumny had not dared to send forth even a whisper,

and who could merit it least of all at a moment when visited by the heaviest affliction." And Pitt might have added, but he did not, how doubly hard, how doubly cruel, the charge against her if it had been sanctioned by one of her own sons.

In the debates that now ensued the principal spokesman on the Prince's side was Sheridan, and the chief struggle was on the fifth Resolution, which related to the Royal Household. But here the Minister again prevailed. A moderate amendment, moved by Lord North, to insert the words "for a limited time," was rejected on the 19th of January by 220 votes against 165.

The five Resolutions being communicated to the Lords, were by them affirmed, though not without a keen debate, a division, and a protest, the latter signed among others by their Royal Highnesses of York and Cumberland. The next step was to open Parliament in form by a Commission under the Great Seal, and the next, on the 5th of February, to introduce in the House of Commons the Regency Bill founded on the preceding Resolutions. The Bill passed rapidly through all its stages. The Opposition were dispirited by their recent failures. Fox was ill, and had gone to Bath. Burke alone indulged in some new sallies of passion. Thus one day we find him inveighing against the Minister, who he said was "acting treason. By his Bill he intends not only to degrade the Prince of Wales, but to outlaw, excommunicate, and attaint the whole House of Brunswick."

But here, amidst loud cries of "Order," Mr. Pitt rose.

"In any attacks upon myself," he said, "I seldom think it worth while to interrupt the Right Hon. gentleman, or, indeed, to make him any answer. But when the acts of the House are called in question, and a Bill, avowedly founded on those acts, is described in such terms as we have heard, I do hope that the House will interpose its authority."

Still Burke was by no means checked in his wild career. On a later day he gave still much more offence by some words that seemed an insult to the King. He spoke of his afflicted Sovereign as "having been by the Almighty hurled from his Throne and plunged into a condition which drew down upon him the pity of the meanest peasant in his kingdom!" But here a storm of indignation rose. Lord Graham sprang up and declared he would allow no man to say the King was hurled from the Throne. "Take down his words!" cried other Members. Burke attempted to explain, but with slight effect upon the House.

The Regency Bill finally passed the House of Commons on the 12th of February. On the 17th and 18th the Peers discussed it in Committee. The Third Reading was close impending, and the Chancellor was ready to give immediately afterwards the substitute for the Royal Assent.

But a change was now at hand in the King's health. On the 2nd of February Miss Burney met the King by accident for the first time since the 5th of November. He was walking in Kew Gardens between the two Doctors Willis, and engaged her in conversation for a considerable time. She observed some wildness in his

eyes, and a great deal of incoherence in his language. From the 6th the improvement grew rapid and decided. Dr. Willis, who was in daily communication with Mr. Pitt, declared himself clearly of opinion that after a short period no part of His Majesty's mental disorder would remain. For some time Dr. Warren was reluctant to acknowledge any real improvement in the face of his gloomy predictions. But ere long he was overpowered by the force of facts. The public bulletin of the 12th of February mentioned "progressive amendment," and that of the 17th "a state of convalescence."

Still Pitt and Lord Thurlow, feeling the magnitude of the point at issue, hesitated. But Dr. Willis was clear in his own opinion. He sought an interview with Lord Thurlow, and repeated that opinion in the strongest terms. As the story was afterwards told by one of his sons, Dr. Willis actually "bullied" the Chancellor before he could make him stir in the matter.

On the 19th, however, a Cabinet was held, and in consequence of the decision which was there adopted the Chancellor that same evening rose in the House of Lords, and announcing the auspicious news proposed that the Committee on the Regency Bill should be put off till the 23rd. "And," Miss Burney adds, "this evening, for the first time, the King came upstairs to drink tea with the Queen and Princesses in the drawing-room. Huzza! huzza!"

On that afternoon also Pitt wrote to his mother, after several weeks of silence, to give her the good news.

"Thursday, Feb. 19, 1789.

"My dear Mother,

"You will have seen for some days how constantly the news from Kew has been improving. The public account this morning is that the King continues advancing in recovery. The private one is that he is to all appearance perfectly well, and if it were the case of a private man, would be immediately declared so. It remains only to consider how far he can bear the impression of the state of public business; but in consequence of these circumstances the Bill will probably be postponed in the House of Lords to-day till Monday; and if the prospect is then confirmed, the plan of the Regency must probably be altered with a view to a very short interval indeed, or perhaps wholly laid aside. This intelligence will be welcome enough to excuse a short letter, and I could not resist the pleasure of communicating it, though not in a moment, as you may imagine, of much more leisure than even for some time past under different circumstances.

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. Pitt."

On the 20th the Chancellor went himself to Kew, and had an interview of an hour and a quarter with the King. He was with His Majesty again on the 22nd, and reported to Pitt that he never at any period had seen him more composed, collected, and distinct. On the 23rd—thus writes Mr. Grenville to his brother at Dublin Castle—"the two Princes were at Kew, and saw the King in the Queen's apartment. She was present the whole time, a precaution for which, God knows, there was but too much reason. They kept him waiting

a considerable time before they arrived, and after they left him drove immediately to Mrs. Armistead's, in Park Street, in hopes of finding Fox there, to give him an account of what had passed."

Later on the same day, the 23rd, the King wrote his first letter since his illness to Pitt; an excellent letter, as Wilberforce, to whom it was shown in confidence, calls it in his Diary. On the morrow ensued the first interview between the Monarch and the Minister. Pitt on his return from Kew called upon Grenville, and gave him in perfect unreserve an account of what had passed. "I was with the King," he said, "above an hour this morning. There was not the smallest trace or appearance of any disorder. His manner was unusually composed and dignified; but there was no other difference whatever from what I had been used to see. The King spoke of his disorder as of a thing past, and which had left no other impression on his mind than that of gratitude for his recovery, and a sense of what he owed to those who had stood by him. He spoke of these in such a manner as brought tears into his eyes, but with that degree of affection of mind there was not the least appearance of his disorder. After I had left His Majesty I conversed with Willis, who told me that he now thought the King quite well; that he could not perceive the least trace remaining of his malady."

Thus fell to the ground at once the Regency Bill, and all that airy fabric of hopes which the Opposition had reared upon it. The sole remaining question was whether the King's resumption of authority should be by his own act or through an examination of physicians.

The latter course would have been the more logical and Parliamentary, but the former was most in accordance with personal respect and public feeling, and this was accordingly preferred.

The exultation of the great body of the people at the good news of the King's recovery was most warmly shown. On the day when he resumed his authority there was, unbidden by the Government, a general illumination of London. His domestic virtues could not but be contrasted in the minds of all by-standers with the character and recent conduct of the Prince of Wales. As a day of public Thanksgiving the 23rd of April was appointed, and it was kept with every token of heartfelt joy and gratitude in all the churches and chapels of the kingdom.

The public joy which appeared throughout the land on the 23rd of April attained its highest pitch, its most eminent manifestation, in London, where the King and Queen, attended by the Royal Family, by the two Houses of Parliament, and by the great Officers of State, went in procession to attend the solemn service of Thanksgiving at St. Paul's. The streets along the line of route, the windows and the platforms which had been raised beside them, were thronged with an innumerable concourse of spectators; and within the cathedral no sooner had His Majesty reached the open space under the great dome, than the organ, accompanied by the voices of above five thousand children of the City Charity Schools, began the hundredth psalm. The simple melody joined to the spectacle much affected the King. He had walked in between the Bishop of Lon-

don and the Bishop of Lincoln as Dean of St. Paul's; and turning to the latter, he said with great emotion, "I now feel that I have been ill." In the evening there ensued a second illumination, general and brilliant beyond all former example.

The day of Thanksgiving at St. Paul's is regarded by Lord Macaulay as the zenith in the political life of Mr. Pitt. "To such a height of power and glory," he says, "had this extraordinary man risen at twenty-nine years of age. And now," he adds, perhaps less justly, "the tide was on the turn."

The joy in England at the restoration of the King, though its mainspring was the national loyalty, might no doubt be further heightened on considering what would have been the results in Ireland had his malady continued. The most eminent members of the Irish Legislature had come to London in December. Mr. Grattan had closely watched the proceedings of the House of Commons from beneath the Gallery, but had given no public indication of his views. In truth, however, so far as the question of Regency was concerned, he had thoroughly espoused the opinions of Fox. When, therefore, the Irish Parliament met in February, Grattan, far from following the precedent set in England, moved an Address to the Prince of Wales inviting him to assume, during the King's illness, the Government of Ireland, with full kingly powers. This Address was carried in both Houses. Being then in due form laid before the Lord Lieutenant, His Excellency replied that a sense of his official duty as a sworn servant of the King must preclude him from transmitting, as was

requested, this Address to England. Then the two Houses, again urged on by Grattan, resolved to send over their Address by delegates of their own. For this mission the Commons chose four of their members, and the Peers the Duke of Leinster and Lord Charlemont.

It follows, therefore, that had not George the Third at this very period resumed his Royal functions, the Regency in the two countries would have been held on wholly different tenures—in England with restricted, in Ireland with unrestricted authority. Hard it seems to say whether such a result, if carried to its full consequences, would have been attended with most of inconvenience or most of ridicule; and this instance is alone sufficient to cast the gravest doubts in an Imperial point of view on the wisdom and policy of that Legislative Equality which Grattan had achieved in 1782.

On reviewing the whole of these Parliamentary conflicts, they will be found, I think, to reflect high honour on Mr. Pitt. He had certainly an up-hill battle to fight. With the general belief, in the first instance, that the King's recovery was hopeless, there was also a general desire to find favour with the Prince of Wales. And the question being wholly new, there was no inconsistency involved in any vote that might be given on the side of His Royal Highness. Nothing but the consummate skill and unconquerable firmness of Pitt could have waged so unequal a conflict with success. Even these might not have prevailed, had they not been aided by the faults of his opponents. The whole conduct of the Prince's friends, from the first claim of right by Fox down to the last gust of passion from

Burke, does indeed display an extraordinary series of errors. Had they done what was prudent, or, what is often most prudent in difficult emergencies, done nothing at all, the majority of Pitt might have wavered or broke asunder, and the restrictions which he deemed requisite might not have been imposed.

But the argument may be carried further still. We may observe that all the delays and obstructions which took place in the appointment of a Regency, came, not from Mr. Pitt, but from his opponents. Had they not, besides putting forward their inadmissible claim of right, moved for new Committees and fresh examinations, the Prince of Wales must have assumed the government soon after Christmas. The King after his recovery more than once declared that, had he then found a Regency established, he should have regarded it as an Act of Lunacy against himself, and should have refused to resume his power. But in any case the authority of the Prince as Regent, and of Mr. Fox as Minister, even had it endured only a few weeks, would have been of no slight importance. A great number of Members of Parliament desirous of supporting the Government of the day would have passed over to the new standard and become committed to it; and if Mr. Pitt had then come back to office under the King's resumed authority, it would have been as shorn of no small part of his past ascendant.

It may be added before I quit this subject, that the King's recovery, though complete for all purposes of government, was not clear of all clouds, nor free from all danger of relapse. His letters to Mr. Pitt during

the remainder of the Session contain many complaints that he did not feel well. It appears also that Dr. Willis and his son Dr. John paid occasional visits to the King, both at Kew and Windsor, during the months of April, May, and June

We may also observe that on the King's recovery his attachment to his Chancellor appeared the same as before. Perhaps Mr. Pitt may have been unwilling to agitate His Majesty, and forbore from stating to him the treacherous conduct of Lord Thurlow during the Royal malady. Perhaps the King, in spite of such a statement, may have retained his former feelings. Certain it is that we find him, in writing to Mr. Pitt, on April 21, 1789, strongly press for a cordial concert between his two principal Ministers. But the Chancellor proved the truth of the vigorous lines,

> " Forgiveness to the injured does belong:—
> But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong."

It was he who, ever since the King's recovery, showed aversion and bitterness to Mr. Pitt, rather than Mr. Pitt to him.

CHAPTER XIII.

1789—1790.

Pitt's financial measures — Wilberforce's Speech on the Slave Trade — Mr. Addington elected Speaker — Promotions in the Peerage — Duel between the Duke of York and Colonel Lennox — National defences — Lord Buckingham's wish for a Dukedom — Refused by the King — Lord Westmorland appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland — Trial of Stockdale — French Revolution — Opinions of Fox and Burke — Policy of Pitt — Affair of Nootka Sound — Dissolution of Parliament — The Westminster Election — Continued difference with Spain — Secret negociation at Paris — Convention signed at Madrid — Dr. Price and Lord Stanhope — Essay on the French Revolution by Burke.

ON the restoration of the King to health, the debates in Parliament, so long confined to the single topic of his illness, resumed their customary course. In finance, Pitt consented to remit the Shop-tax, which he had imposed in 1785. It had grown highly unpopular, above all in London and Westminster, which paid, as is alleged, three fourths of the whole tax; and Fox had brought forward annual motions against it, which Pitt had successfully resisted, but in which his majorities had declined.

Another financial measure of this year related to the tax upon tobacco. Pitt had calculated that twelve millions of pounds were annually consumed in the kingdom, while the legal importation was only of seven millions; so that no less than five millions must be smuggled, at a loss to the revenue of

300,000*l.* a year. To remedy this pernicious system, Pitt proposed and carried a Bill, transferring the greater part of the duty from the Customs to the Excise, and therefore, of course, subjecting the manufacturer of tobacco to the survey of the Exciseman.

In 1789, owing chiefly to the delays produced by the King's illness, the House of Lords could allot only seventeen days to the trial of Hastings, so that little progress was made. But the vehemence of Burke exposed the party of the prosecutors to considerable disadvantage. In opening the Charge relative to presents, on the 21st of April, he travelled far beyond the limits of that Charge, asserting in express terms that Hastings had murdered Nuncomar by the hands of Sir Elijah Impey. Upon this Mr. Hastings drew up, and Major Scott presented, a petition to the House of Commons, complaining of such unauthorised allegations on the part of those who professed to speak as the representatives and from the instructions of the House. Several warm debates ensued. Fox did his best to vindicate his friend; but with better reason Pitt maintained that it was utterly unjustifiable in the Managers to bring forward accusations against Mr. Hastings which were not contained in the Articles of Impeachment, and which could not therefore be comprised in the directions of the House. And finally, on the motion of the Marquis of Graham, one of the Lords of the Treasury, a vote of censure was carried, by a large majority, upon the words which Burke had used.

On the 8th of May Mr. Henry Beaufoy renewed the motion for a repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

Though withstood both by Pitt and Lord North—a present and a late Prime Minister—there was but a small majority against the motion; the numbers being 122 and 102. This deserves to be noticed as one of the last occasions when the Commons' debates display to us the once familiar name of Lord North. His health had become impaired, and next year he succeeded his father as Earl of Guilford.

Another proposal made in this Session by Mr. Beaufoy was to set apart by Act of Parliament a day of annual Thanksgiving for the Revolution of 1688. The Bill for this purpose passed the Commons with little notice or remark. But in the Lords it stirred up so much indignation in the breast of at least one Prelate, Bishop Warren of Bangor, that his Lordship would not, according to the usual form, await the Second Reading, but opposed it even on the First. This Bill, the Bishop said, was quite unnecessary, since the great event of the Revolution was already commemorated by the Church in the Service of the 5th of November—"a Service," added his Lordship, "drawn up with great gravity and wisdom, and as unexceptionable a Service as any in the whole Book of Common Prayer." On the other hand, Lord Stanhope, replying to the Bishop of Bangor, found great fault with the Service of the 5th of November. But the Chancellor declaring his full agreement with the Bishop, the Bill was thrown out, in a thin House, by thirteen Peers to six.

On the 12th of May Mr. Wilberforce brought forward the question of the Slave Trade. His speech of three hours and a quarter was acknowledged as one of

the ablest and most powerful ever heard in Parliament. He was warmly supported both by Pitt and Fox. Yet, strange as it may seem, the cause for which such men combined, instead of making further way, receded. The exertions of the planters, the cries of Liverpool and Bristol, had succeeded in creating a vague, but prevalent feeling of alarm. The Abolition of the nefarious traffic had begun to be commonly looked upon as a fine-spun theory; sounding well in speeches, but likely to be ruinous in practice. All that could be done this year was to avoid an open defeat by calling for further evidence at the Bar of the House of Commons.

Before the close of the Session there was another vacancy in the Chair of the House of Commons. During the King's illness Grenville had agreed to fill that post, as a temporary measure at a difficult crisis, and with a clear understanding that it was "not to prejudice his other views." In June accordingly he was named Secretary of State, in the place of Lord Sydney. He was succeeded as Speaker, on the nomination of the Government, by Henry Addington, son of the physician and friend of Lord Chatham, and himself a friend of Pitt. It proved an excellent choice, though questionable at the outset on the ground of youth and inexperience, since Addington had but just completed his thirty-second year.

Lord Sydney did not retire from Downing Street without some substantial tokens of the friendship and esteem of Pitt. He received a sinecure office for life, as Chief Justice of Eyre, which had recently fallen vacant, and

was worth 2500*l.* a year.[1] Moreover he was advanced a step in the Peerage as Viscount Sydney, and his eldest son was made a Lord of the Admiralty. The wishes of the Earl of Salisbury, Lord Chamberlain, and of Viscount Weymouth were also gratified by a like promotion. The former became Marquis of Salisbury, and the latter Marquis of Bath. Lord Fortescue having represented, through Mr. Pitt, that he stood high in the list of Barons, and that an Earldom had already been held in his family, he was advanced to that dignity. The King, in the letter which expressed his assent to these favours, proposed of his own accord another Earldom for Lord Mount Edgcumbe, which was conferred accordingly. A little later in the year, William Eden, now ambassador at the Hague, was raised to the Irish Peerage as Lord Auckland.

In the spring of this year was fought a duel between the Duke of York and Colonel Lennox, nephew and heir-presumptive of the Duke of Richmond. The Colonel had gone up to His Royal Highness, on the parade at St. James's, and asked for an explanation of some disparaging words, relative to himself, which the Duke was reported to have used elsewhere. The Duke with great propriety ordered the Colonel to return to his post; but when the parade was over, His Royal Highness went into the Orderly Room, sent for Colonel Lennox, and in the presence of all the other officers said to him, "I desire to derive no protection from my rank as a Prince, or my station as commanding officer. When not on duty I wear a brown coat, and shall be ready as a private gentleman to give you satisfaction."

[1] Cornwallis Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 5.

In consequence a meeting took place at Wimbledon, both parties to fire upon a signal given. The ball of Colonel Lennox grazed one of the Duke's curls, but His Royal Highness did not fire in return, and the seconds then put a close to the affair. The result was mainly to exhibit in strong colours the unhappy estrangement which late events had wrought in the Royal Family: for a ball being given at St. James's shortly afterwards, Colonel Lennox received an invitation from Her Majesty; and it is added, not perhaps on sufficient grounds, that on coming he was treated with marked attention.[2]

In the summer, the King being advised to confirm his health by some sea-bathing, went to Weymouth, accompanied by the Queen and Princesses. His mode of life upon the coast is thus described:—"He usually rises at six, walks the Parade till eight, takes breakfast before ten, rides till three, dines at four, and resumes the promenade with the Queen and Princesses till late in the evening, provided the weather be fine." Sometimes the scene was varied by a sailing party on the sea, or an excursion inland; and their Majesties visited both Exeter and Plymouth before they returned to Windsor.[3]

Towards the same period we find Pitt write to Lady Chatham, and refer with great interest to the events in France. It was on the very day of the taking of the Bastille.

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[2] See on this point the Fox Memorials, vol. ii. p. 308.

[3] Compare the Ann. Reg., 1789, p. 261, with Miss Burney's Diary, vol. iv. pp. 28–66, and the King's own account of his health in a note to Pitt, dated Exeter, Aug. 27, 1789.

"Downing Street, July 14, 1789.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I find at last a little leisure for using my pen, from the circumstance, which the papers would inform you of, of my being within these two days a prisoner from a lameness, which is just enough to confine me, and to justify some pretensions to the name of gout. Lest it should be magnified into more than it is, I am anxious that you should receive from myself a certificate of my being in all other respects perfectly well, and feeling very little inconvenience indeed from this slight specimen of what I have long been very well entitled to. I am very happy to be able to tell you that we draw within sight of the close of the Session, not very long after which I hope to find myself at liberty to extend my excursion as far as Burton. Indeed I flatter myself the King's stay in the West will give me a very good opportunity of remaining in that part of the world something nearer a reasonable time than has been the case in any of my visits lately. You will easily believe this makes me not the less impatient for the Recess, which promises at present, in all respects, a good share of holidays. Our neighbours in France seem coming to actual extremes, the King having suddenly dismissed M. Necker, and appearing determined to support his authority against the National Assembly. This scene, added to the prevailing scarcity, makes that country an object of compassion, even to a rival.

"Believe me ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT.

"Let me add my affectionate compliments to Mrs. Stapleton, and kind remembrances to Mrs. Sparry. I long to see your sweet little companions, whom I can hardly expect to know again."

The "little companions" mentioned in this letter were Pitt's three nieces, the Ladies Stanhope, who were then on a visit to their grandmother. Owing to Lord Stanhope's estrangement from him, he had not seen them for a considerable time.

The following letter from the Duke of Richmond indicates not his own views merely, but those of Pitt, at this period in respect to national defences.

"My dear Sir, "Goodwood, Sept. 13, 1789.

. . . . . .

"I perfectly agree with you that the popular prejudice in favour of the Navy and against fortifications is so great, that it would be much easier to avail oneself of the former than to combat the latter; and I think if all was ready to set these people at work immediately on bringing water into Plymouth Dock town for the use of the navy, it would be best so to employ them. But the misfortune is that neither the plan is sufficiently settled to be able to proceed upon immediately, nor the ground through which the stream must be brought purchased, so that until an Act of Parliament is passed to buy the land, nothing material can be done. But if the works on Maker could be gone on with, they might begin to-morrow. I suggested this as an idea which might possibly be mentioned to the Western members; and if they approved of it as a remedy for such a dangerous case, I think it might be adopted; but while things are quiet, people are very apt to neglect the means of keeping them so, and the same idea will prevail more than it ought on account of France's present situation. It will make us too secure, and neglect the going on with those fortifications which, take my word for it, we shall some day regret not having pursued;

but I am sensible how difficult it is to impress this idea generally, and therefore, like most other things, it must take its chance, and be governed by that great agent accident, instead of prudence. I shall, however, prepare the plan for getting the water to Plymouth Dock as you desire.

"I shall at all times be happy to see you, and am only sorry it is likely to be so late as a month hence, as I wish to show you two very long letters I have had from the Chancellor, and my answer. He is by no means in good humour, and there are some points I wish much to talk to you upon.

"I am ever most truly and sincerely yours,

"RICHMOND."

During the November of this year we find Lord Buckingham in a most resentful mood. Early in the spring he had been much incensed in the matter of a military promotion, which the King thought the right of Colonel Gwynn, but which the Marquis claimed for a kinsman of his own. In the summer he came over to take the waters of Bath, and in the autumn he finally resigned his Vice-Royalty on the ground of illness. "The wretched state of my health, sacrificed in the discharge of my duty:" such was his language at the time to Mr. Pitt. But he declared that the obloquy which he had incurred in Ireland during the King's illness called for "some distinct and special mark of His Majesty's favour." The mark of favour at which he pointed was a Dukedom. He pressed it in the strongest manner both on his brother William and on Mr. Pitt, and the latter promised to do his utmost in the Closet after the next Drawing Room.

In pursuance of the same object we find on the 6th of November William Grenville write: "The Drawing Room was so very late yesterday, that it was impossible for Pitt to go into the Closet afterwards, as it was not over till past five, and the King had to go back to Windsor afterwards. This being the case, we have agreed that, to prevent any further delay, Pitt shall write to the King upon the subject, stating all the arguments. . . . I own I am by no means sorry that the lateness of the Drawing Room has given a plea for having recourse to this mode, as I have always observed it to succeed best with the King. All the points may be more forcibly urged by being collected and stated in reference to each other in a manner which the King's desultory way of speaking makes almost impossible."— These last words deserve particular attention. They supply an answer to the question which is sometimes put why in 1801 Mr. Pitt, when he was pleading for the Roman Catholic claims and staking the existence of his Ministry upon them, thought it best to write to the King instead of asking an audience of His Majesty.

It was impossible to write a more pressing letter than did Mr. Pitt to forward the wishes of Lord Buckingham. The King, however, refused. He had no objection, as we have seen, to create Marquises and Earls, but he was determined to reserve the rank of Duke for the Princes of his family.

At this refusal the "pain and misery" of Lord Buckingham (such are his own words in his letter to Pitt)

were great indeed. He announced to the Minister his fixed determination, as a sign of his displeasure, to resign the Lord Lieutenancy of the county. "I hope you will forgive my adding," so answered Pitt on the 12th of November, "that the step which you meditate in consequence is not only painful to me for a thousand reasons both public and personal, but is one which seems likely to produce effects in the public impression the reverse of everything you would yourself wish. . . . I really feel so anxious on the subject that I cannot help having a wish to be able to state to you in conversation, before you take your final resolution, all that occurs to me on the subject; and if I thought it would not be inconvenient to you, I should be very glad to take the first day of leisure to come to you at Stowe for that purpose. I am pretty sure that I should have nothing to prevent my doing it on Sunday next."

Mr. Pitt went accordingly to Stowe on the day he proposed, and he appears to have in great measure pacified his cousin. With praiseworthy caution on such delicate topics we find him, in writing to Lady Chatham, speak of this as though it had been only a trip of pleasure.

"Holwood, Nov. 21, 1789.

"My excursions all proved extremely pleasant. The last has been to Stowe, where I went last Sunday, and found Lord Buckingham getting much better."

The selection of a new Lord Lieutenant for Ireland was a matter fo great perplexity. At length Pitt pitched upon John Fane, tenth Earl of Westmorland,

who was born like himself in 1759. Few public men have been longer in high office. Thirty-seven years from the time when he was sent to Ireland we find him still a member of Lord Liverpool's Cabinet. "There are several points," so writes Mr. Grenville in October, 1789, "in which Westmorland would do perfectly. There are those in which he fails, but God knows the list to choose out of is not long."

In the same month of November, the King, perceiving the continued alienation of the Chancellor from the Prime Minister, addressed a letter to the first upon the subject. He received a most satisfactory reply. Lord Thurlow appears to have promised that he would give Mr. Pitt no further grounds to complain. But the promise was not fulfilled.

On the 9th of December came on before Lord Kenyon the trial of Mr. John Stockdale. He had been the publisher, two years before, of a pamphlet which contained some violent language against the promoters of Hastings's trial. In February, 1788, Fox had brought it before the House of Commons as an heinous case of libel. "I admit the libel," said Pitt, "and I observe that I am myself comprised in it, yet I see nothing so peculiarly heinous as to warrant our singling out this publication from the general mass." Nevertheless Fox prevailed. He moved and carried an Address to the King, desiring that the author and publisher might be prosecuted by the Attorney-General. When the trial came on, Erskine was counsel for Stockdale, and delivered one of the most masterly of his many masterly speeches at the Bar. The result justified the prudence

of Pitt, for the Jury, after some deliberation, brought in a verdict of Not Guilty.[4]

We are now come in order of time to that great French Revolution, doomed in its speedy consequences to subdue the greater part of Europe, and to try to the utmost the energy of Pitt, the strength and spirit of England. For many years past had that mighty storm been gathering; its signs unheeded by the world at large, but surely discerned by the leading spirits of the age. Thus wrote Chesterfield in 1752: "But this I foresee in France, that before the end of this century the trade of both King and Priest will not be half so good a one as it has been."[5] And thus wrote Rousseau in 1762: "We are approaching a state of crisis and an age of Revolutions."[6]

Of the French Revolution, however, I shall not attempt in any detail either to examine the causes, or to relate the progress. Let it here suffice to say, that the Assembly of Notables, as planned by M. de Calonne, failing in its object, drew on, by its failure, the long-dreaded convocation of the States-General. That important body, which had lain dormant since 1614, and which had grown the more formidable from its long disuse, met again on the 5th of May, 1789. Not long content with the traditions of the past, it speedily proclaimed itself "the National Assembly." Then the dismissal of Necker, and the unpopularity of the King and Queen,

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[4] Trial of John Stockdale, as taken in short hand by Joseph Gurney, and published by Stockdale himself, 1790.

[5] Letter to his Son, April 13, 1752.

[6] See the *Emile*, liv. iii.

precipitated a catastrophe which no skill perhaps could have quite averted. First did the popular fury turn against the ancient State-Prison on the Boulevards of Paris. On the memorable 14th of July the multitude, rising in arms, assailed and took the Bastille, and put to death in cold blood the chief men of its feeble garrison. Tumult and riot ensued in several other parts of the kingdom. Tumult and riot may be said to have prevailed even in the National Assembly; for there, on the night of the 4th of August, in a giddy whirl of enthusiasm, and without a word of deliberation, with no thought for existing interests, and with no provision for current business, these raw legislators swept away in a single vote the complicated privileges of a thousand years—the rights of the Clergy, the rights of the Nobles, the rights of the Parliament, and the rights of the provinces.

Yet, enormous as was the amount of these inconsiderate concessions, the mob of Paris was not willing to acquiesce in any course of regular government. Elated with their past success as destroyers of the Bastille, and instigated by a secret Society, which soon afterwards took the name of "Jacobins," they again rose in arms on the 5th of October, amidst loud cries—"To Versailles! to Versailles!" and thither they marched accordingly, in yelling procession. The unfounded self-reliance of General de Lafayette, as Commander of the National Guard, combined to their triumph with the irresolution of Louis the Sixteenth. They broke into the palace, butchered two of the Gardes-du-Corps; and finally brought back the King and Queen, still in name and title their Sovereigns, but in

truth their captives, to Paris. Even at that time it became apparent that neither the King, nor yet the Assembly, nor yet the people of the country, but only the mob of the capital, had the true direction of affairs. Even then might have been applied those words which the Minister of the United States, in France, afterwards used as summing up his experience of the Revolution in that kingdom:—"It has appeared to me that Paris decides for the whole of France, and that the populace decides for Paris." [7]

It was natural that even at the outset these great events should be regarded from opposite points of view. Men who considered only the abuses of the old French Monarchy, might rejoice in its probable overthrow. Other men, who saw those abuses as clearly, might nevertheless abhor spoliation too, and distrust mob-violence as an instrument of reformation. And from the very first, as it chanced, the two leaders of the Whig party in the House of Commons, Fox and Burke, inclined to these opposite sides. Thus only a few days after the taking of the Bastille we find Fox exultingly exclaim:—"How much it is the greatest event that ever happened in the world! And how much the best!" [8] And here, on the contrary, are some expressions of Burke a few weeks later, when writing to a friend in France:—"You hope, Sir, that I think the French deserving of liberty. I certainly do. I certainly think that all men who desire it, deserve it. It is not the reward of our merit, or the acquisition of our industry.

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[7] Gouverneur Morris to Randolph, April 15, 1794, as published in Morris's Life and Correspondence.

[8] Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 361.

It is our inheritance. It is the birth-right of our species. But whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice, neither is in my opinion safe."[9]

This divergence of opinion was not long confined to private letters. It broke forth publicly in the Session which commenced in the January following. The King, who opened that Session in person, stated in the Speech from the Throne, that the affairs of the Continent had engaged his most serious attention; but he passed no other judgment upon them. Nor was any increase, however moderate, proposed in the Army Estimates. The number was still as last year, for between 17,000 and 18,000 effective men. Fox nevertheless urged some reduction, though not, as he acknowledged, on any Constitutional ground. For the example of a neighbouring nation, said he, had proved that former imputations on a standing army were unfounded calumnies; and it was now known throughout Europe, that, by becoming a soldier, a man did not cease to be a citizen.

These and some other such expressions on the part of the Member for Westminster called forth on a subsequent day the Member for Malton. Throwing, as was his wont, his whole heart into the subject, Burke delivered the first of his beautiful philippics, spoken or written, against the French Revolution. "Since the House," he said, "was prorogued in the summer, much work has been done in France. The French have shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto existed in the world. In that very short space

[9] Correspondence of Burke, vol. iii. pp. 105 and 107.

of time they have completely pulled down to the ground their Monarchy, their Church, their nobility, their law, their revenue, their army, their navy, their commerce, their arts, and their manufactures. They have done their business for us as rivals, in a way which twenty Ramilies or Blenheims could never have done. Were we absolute conquerors, and France to lie prostrate at our feet, we should be ashamed to send a Commission to settle their affairs which would impose so hard a law upon the French, and so destructive of all their consequence as a nation, as that they had imposed upon themselves."

Such were the discordant opinions proclaimed on this subject and at this period from the main Opposition bench. Fox in his views was supported—perhaps even outrun—by Sheridan; Burke in his by Windham; and the breach thus begun, seemed far more likely to widen than to close.

The views of Pitt at this period, while greatly differing from Fox's, were by no means altogether the same as Burke's. "The present convulsions of France," he said, "must sooner or later terminate in general harmony and regular order; and though such a situation might make her more formidable, it might also make her less obnoxious as a neighbour. I wish for the restoration of tranquillity in that country, although it appears to me distant. Whenever her system shall become restored, if it should prove freedom rightly understood, freedom resulting from good order and good government, France would stand forward as one of the most brilliant Powers in Europe. Nor can I regard

with envious eyes any approximation in neighbouring States to those sentiments which are the characteristics of every British subject." [1]

It was not, however, upon France that the main attention of our Ministers was then directed. Still more anxiously did they turn their eyes to Spain, where a serious difference had arisen, threatening a positive war. Captain Cook in one of his voyages had explored an extensive Sound, called by the natives Nootka, on the coast, as he supposed, of the North American continent, but in truth of Vancouver's Island. It seemed a position well adapted to supply the Chinese market with furs, and since 1786 some Englishmen in India had commenced this trade. More recently two ships of larger size had been despatched, and some grants of land were obtained from the native chiefs. But these proceedings had been viewed with the utmost jealousy by the Spanish officers in Mexico. With no just claim upon this district, either by discovery or occupation, they had recourse to an arrogant boast. They asserted that their Sovereign was entitled as of right to all lands on the western coast of America between Cape Horn and the sixtieth degree of north latitude.

In the spring of 1789, accordingly, an English vessel, the Iphigenia, under Captain Douglas, was peaceably anchored in Nootka Sound, and the operations of trade were in quiet progress, when there appeared two Spanish ships of war sent from the port of San Blas, and commanded by Don Estevan Martinez. For some days

[1] Speech of Feb. 9, 1790.

nothing but civilities passed between them, till of a sudden the Iphigenia was seized in the name of the King of Spain; the officers and crew being conveyed on board the Spanish ships and put in irons. Nor was the Iphigenia restored, and permission granted them to sail away to the Sandwich Islands, until after the entire plunder of her cargo and their property. The British flag on the new settlement was pulled down, and the Spanish hoisted in its place; and at a later period three other smaller vessels were likewise seized and detained.

So grievous an insult could not fail to be resented by a country like England, and a Minister like Pitt. Prompt and vigorous representations on the subject were addressed to the Court of Madrid. The Spaniards answered that the Iphigenia, with her officers and crew, had been already released by an order from the Viceroy of Mexico, but solely on account of the presumed ignorance of those officers, who had, though unknowingly, trespassed on the dominion of Spain. That dominion —that exclusive right of trade and navigation on the north-west coast of America—was still pertinaciously asserted at Madrid, but no less pertinaciously resisted in London. And intelligence was now received that on finding the English Cabinet thus firm, the Spaniards, rather than yield, were collecting their fleets at Cadiz and Ferrol, and otherwise preparing for war.

Up to this time the secret of these critical negotiations had been carefully kept. But on the 4th of May the country was surprised by an Order for the general impressment of seamen; and on the following day a Message from the King, announcing the prospect of

war, was presented to both Houses; to the Commons by Mr. Pitt, and to the Lords by the Duke of Leeds, for to the Dukedom of Leeds had Lord Carmarthen now succeeded. In reply, there were Addresses assuring His Majesty of the support of Parliament; and a vote of credit for a million was passed. These were all carried with one voice, although some chief men in Opposition—Fox, Francis, and Grey—made objections and raised debates on some collateral points, as the absence of our ambassador from Madrid, and the trifling value of the trade to Nootka Sound.

These debates on foreign policy may be deemed the most important of that Session. There was also a motion by Mr. Flood for a Reform in Parliament, which was lost without a division, and in which Flood did not altogether sustain the high reputation which he had earned in Ireland. Further, there was a motion by Fox for the repeal of the Test Act. He was opposed not only by Pitt, but by Burke and Wilberforce, and defeated by a majority of almost three to one. The speech of Burke above all excited great attention. He owned that ten years before, he should, far from opposing, have supported this motion; but he pointed to the growing influence and dangerous example of the French Revolution, and he read passages from the writings of both Dr. Price and Dr. Priestley to show that the total subversion of the Church had become the avowed object of some leading Dissenters.

Six years had the Parliament now endured, and its Prorogation on the 10th of June was immediately followed by its Dissolution. There was little of popular

excitement in the new elections. It was felt by the nation at large that when Pitt had declared earlier in the Session that "we are adding daily to our strength, wealth, and prosperity,"[2] he had uttered no vain or empty boast; and that our flourishing condition was in no small degree the work of his able hands. Under the impression of these feelings the triumphant Ministerial majority which the old elections had given was more than confirmed by the new. Fox was enabled to maintain his seat for Westminster, but not as before with Townshend for a colleague. Lord Hood appeared once more as the Ministerial candidate. No other came forward, on either the regular Government or regular Opposition side, but only Horne Tooke on the "Independent interest," so that Fox and Hood were easily returned.

The cause of the tranquillity of Westminster and retirement of Townshend will best appear from the following Memorandum written in Mr. Dundas's hand, and preserved among Mr. Pitt's papers:—

"On the 15th March, 1790, Lord Lauderdale and Mr. Pitt held a conversation on the subject of the Westminster election, Mr. Dundas present.

"They agreed that each party should propose and support only one candidate respectively at the first general election, and during the whole of next Parliament, so long as either the Duke of Portland or Mr. Fox on the one part, and Mr. Pitt or Mr. Grenville on the other, are alive, and including every other contingency of death, vacancy, and changes of administration.

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[2] Speech of Feb. 5, 1790.

"In this conversation Mr. Pitt agreed in the name of the present administration or any of which he or Mr. Grenville should be a member.

"Lord Lauderdale agreed in the name, and as authorised by the Duke of Portland or Mr. Fox, or any administration of which either should be a member.

"It was understood that this agreement has nothing to do with any question respecting the right of election for the city of Westminster."

In the midst of the elections we find Pitt write to Lady Chatham and announce their prosperous progress.

"Downing Street, June 24, 1790.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I cannot yet say that I am arrived at a period of much leisure, though it is comparatively something like it, and the occupation arising from the elections is diminishing fast every day. As far as we have yet any account of the returns, there have not been above three or four instances of disappointment, which are counterbalanced by success in other quarters which we hardly expected, and upon the whole I have no doubt of our being considerably stronger than in the last Parliament. We have not yet heard the event of the contest in your neighbourhood at Taunton, but I imagine it will be favourable. Our foreign business remains still in suspense, and I hardly know what to conjecture of the probability of peace or war. In this situation I cannot venture to look with any certainty to the time when I shall be at liberty to move westward, but I hope it may not be very distant. I hope you have had your share of the true summer weather which has prevailed here for some time, and have been able to profit by it. Two or three short visits to Holwood are all that I have yet been

able to accomplish. I am just setting out thither to-day with my brother, to return to the Levee to-morrow.

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

In the apprehension of an impending war with Spain, Pitt was at this time deeply intent on our whole system of Foreign policy. Sometimes he saw reason to find fault with the more immediate conduct of it, as will appear from a letter as follows to the Duke of Leeds.

"Saturday night, June 19, 1790.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I have just seen in the Flanders mail of yesterday Mr. Wilson's despatch of the 18th, enclosing a memorial which he had presented at Brussels, and referring to instructions from your Grace of the 8th. I do not recollect to have seen those instructions, or to have heard anything before on the subject; and I own the measure seems to me so inconsistent with the whole line we have taken respecting the Low Countries, that I fear it cannot fail to be productive of great embarrassment. I shall be glad to see the instructions of the 8th; and the materials on which they were founded will probably throw further light on the subject; but I could not avoid stating my present impression on it to you. "I am, my dear Lord, &c.,

"W. PITT."

During this time a gentleman of great diplomatic skill, Mr. Alleyne Fitzherbert, had been sent to Madrid to bring the negotiation to an issue. He was instructed to make every effort to settle the points in dispute, but firmly to insist on full reparation to the parties injured,

before consenting even to engage in any discussion upon the abstract right. At home Pitt did not allow his anxiety for peace to relax his preparations for war. The martial energy of Chatham seemed now to be renewed in his son. A considerable land-force was raised and mustered. A powerful fleet was made ready for sea, at a vast expense and with almost unprecedented speed. Plans were formed for attacking the Spanish possessions both in the West Indies and South America. Full instructions were sent out to General O'Hara, who commanded at Gibraltar, to the Consuls of the Barbary Coast, and the Governors of the West India Islands.

Nor were our Allies forgotten. Applications were addressed both to Holland and Prussia, claiming the succours which in such cases they had bound themselves by recent treaty to afford. Both, in reply, expressed their readiness to fulfil their engagements. Not quite so satisfactory were the communications with France. There we found ourselves greeted by a Decree of the National Assembly to fit out fourteen sail of the line—these, in all probability, designed to be used against us. M. de Montmorin, then the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, protested, however, to Earl Gower, the English Ambassador, that this was only a measure of precaution; and he let fall some hints of the desire of France to act as Mediator. But the National Assembly, though cheerfully voting the supplies required for the armament, seized the opportunity to wrest from the King his prerogative of peace and war. On a Government so feeble, and a Legislature so grasping and capricious, it was impossible to place any, even the smallest,

reliance. Nevertheless Mr. Pitt was anxious to pursue a most conciliatory course with both.

The views of Pitt at this time will, however, best be shown by one of his own letters, which I here subjoin. It was addressed to Mr. Hugh Elliot, the brother of Sir Gilbert and of Lady Auckland. This gentleman, who had been our Minister at Copenhagen, had gone to visit Paris of his own accord, and without any diplomatic character. As an individual holding very popular opinions, he came into frequent and familiar intercourse with the chiefs of the popular party at that time, as Mirabeau and Barnave; and he received from them strong assurances of their amicable disposition to England. This was the more important since they had formed what they called a "Diplomatic Committee" in the National Assembly, drawing to themselves the entire conduct of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Elliot, therefore, with the sanction of Earl Gower, made known to Mr. Pitt the friendly professions which he had received; and Pitt replied to him as follows early in October, 1790:—

"DEAR SIR,

"I am extremely glad to find by your letter that you have succeeded so well in opening a confidential intercourse with the leaders of what appears to be the ruling party in France. Great advantages may perhaps be derived from this circumstance in the present critical situation. I imagine indeed, from your account, that we can hardly hope, in case war should take place with Spain and should last for any time, that France will not ultimately take part in it.

"But I think there seems to be a reasonable prospect that the persons with whom you communicate may be brought to make such representations to the Spanish Court, even if a rupture should have taken place, as may lead to a speedy restoration of peace by a settlement of the points in dispute, conformably to the principles on which we have hitherto insisted. At least it may be fairly expected that no immediate decision will be taken in France to give actual succour to Spain on the commencement of hostilities; and this point alone, if nothing more should finally be obtained, will be of great consequence, as it will give us considerable advantage in our first operations.

"With respect, however, to the steps to be taken for bringing Spain to accede to our terms, great care must be taken that the French shall not appear as *Mediators*, still less as *Arbitrators;* and on this point I wait with great impatience for the more particular account which you promise to send me of Lord Gower's ideas and yours after the next interview which you were to have with the members of the Diplomatic Committee. I am inclined to think it may be advisable that Lord Gower should be empowered, on the first news of a rupture, to communicate to the French Ministry a statement of the terms on which Mr. Fitzherbert has been instructed to insist, and of the grounds on which they are supported. If such statement should be laid by the Ministry before the Diplomatic Committee or the National Assembly, and a decree could be obtained declaring that those terms ought to be accepted by Spain, such a measure would be highly satisfactory. But I can hardly imagine that anything so decisive can be obtained unless they should be so far satisfied with our conduct as to determine not in any case to support Spain until she is willing to accede to the terms which we have

proposed. Even, however, if this should happen, it is to be observed, that the war having once taken place, these terms may not appear to us sufficient unless they should be accepted by Spain within *a very short period.* The desire of restoring tranquillity would, in all events, incline this country to great moderation; but if the war should last any time, and our operations should have been successful, we shall hardly be expected to make peace without gaining some further advantage to compensate for our expense. This, however, must be a point wholly of subsequent consideration. If, instead of a decisive approbation of our terms, the Assembly or the Committee should approve them only in part, and should suggest any different terms which they may think reasonable, the situation will be much more delicate. Very little good can follow from such a measure, except that by the time which would probably be necessary for answers both from this country and Spain, any hostile decision on the part of France would be retarded, which I have already stated to be a considerable advantage to us. No progress, however, will be made in this way, either towards the restoration of peace (supposing a rupture to have taken place), or towards keeping France ultimately out of the war; as it must be impossible for us, at the suggestion of a third power, to recede in any point from the terms of the ultimatum we have sent to Spain.

"There are two other points to which it is essential to attend in the whole of this business.

"The first of these is, what seems indeed by your letter to be already fully understood, that whatever confidential communications may take place with the Diplomatic Committee for the sake of bringing them to promote our views, no ostensible intercourse can be admitted but through the medium of accredited

Ministers, or the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and that in the name of the King.

"The second point, which is of still more importance, is, that no assurances shall be given, directly or indirectly, which go farther than that this country means to persevere in the neutrality which it has hitherto scrupulously observed with respect to the internal dissensions of France, and from which it will never depart unless the conduct held there should make it indispensable as an act of self-defence; and that we are sincerely desirous of preserving peace, and of cultivating, in general, a friendly intercourse and good understanding between the two nations. But the utmost care is necessary, under the present circumstances, to use no language which can lead to an expectation of our taking measures to forward the internal views of any political party, or of our being ripe to form any alliance between the two countries, which, even if such a thing should be really wished in France, various events might make it impossible for us to accede to, and which would, in any case, at least require great consideration.

"I am, with truth and regard, &c.,

"W. PITT."[3]

Here are some extracts from Mr. Elliot's very long letter in reply:—

"DEAR SIR, "Paris, October 26, 1790.

"I acquainted you in my last letter that I was to have a private conference with a Select Deputation of

[3] This letter of Mr. Pitt has been already published in his Life by Bishop Tomline (vol. iii. p. 131), although the name of Mr. Elliot is there suppressed. He is mentioned only as "a gentleman of considerable diplomatic experience."

the Diplomatic Committee. The persons appointed to meet me were M. Menou, M. Freteau, and M. Barnave —since elected President of the National Assembly.

"I shall not attempt to lay before you the *speech* I made to those gentlemen in the presence of the Vicomte de Noailles, who has taken an active part in favouring my progress here. But I must entreat you will not be surprised at the word *speech*, as nothing is to be accomplished in France without regular oratorical debate. Mine lasted about an hour. M. Barnave replied, and made several objections, which I explained to his full satisfaction. It was then determined that a report of what had passed should be made to the Diplomatic Committee *in pleno*, and that M. Menou should let me know the result of their deliberations.

"The Committee, after assembling in form, unanimously came to the resolution of waiting upon M. de Montmorin *en corps*, and of acquainting that Minister with their intentions. . . . M. de Montmorin agreed in the propriety of this representation, and M. Menou was deputed to tell me. . . . M. Menou executed this commission in the handsomest manner, and I consented to go to England to lay the whole state of the business before you.

"In my speech to the Select Deputation I dwelt first upon the motives which had induced me to come to France. . . . That I was not sent to look for the Olive Leaf, but that I had voluntarily taken my flight for that purpose. . . . That I apprehended the religion of the National Assembly had been surprised when they passed a precipitate Decree founded upon the grossest misrepresentations concerning the British Government. Revenge for the loss of America, desire of conquest, and enmity to the promoters of the French Revolution, were supposed to be the real motives for our armaments.

After combating each of these points, I established, I believe, upon the conviction of those who heard me, the probability that the Court of Spain sought for war in concert with the French malcontents.

"I am also to endeavour to open the eyes of the British Government to the solidity of the French Revolution; and I add with perfect sincerity and thorough conviction that the present Government of France are, in my opinion, bent upon cultivating the most unbounded friendship with Great Britain. They will be frank and cordial in all their communications, and their object is eternal Peace and Friendship with England. If they meet with encouragement, the Commercial Treaty will be confirmed, and no obstacle be thrown in the way of settling the equilibrium of Europe upon the most liberal principles. Our conduct in the North and in the East is approved of, and will be seconded.

"I have despatched this courier with Lord Gower's approbation, in order to let you know my determination of following him at twenty-four hours' distance, and of giving you the earliest notice of what has passed between me and the Committee. I shall drive from Dartford to Beckenham without going to London, and shall then meet you either at Holwood or in Downing Street, as you shall be pleased to direct by sending a letter to wait for me at Lord Auckland's.

"Believe me, with infinite attachment and respect, &c.,

"H. Elliot.

"P.S. I must observe that there is no such thing as a private negotiation to be carried on here. Everything like a secret is avoided as dangerous, and likely to expose those concerned to the *Lanterne*."

Meanwhile, at Madrid, Mr. Fitzherbert had for a long

time been encountered by a downright refusal, or by new inadmissible schemes. Yet in the summer he had seemed on the very point of success. On the 24th of July the Count de Florida Blanca, as the Spanish Prime Minister, had sent to Mr. Fitzherbert a preliminary Declaration, stating that the King his master engaged to make restitution of the British vessels and property seized at Nootka Sound, and to indemnify the parties interested for the losses which they had sustained. But no sooner was the Declaration transmitted than the Spanish statesmen seemed eager to recede from its terms. The British Minister became convinced that, rather than yield, the Court of Spain was resolutely bent on war. Ere long, however, the formidable fleet, far superior to the Spanish, which we had with so much expedition made ready for sea, produced a powerful effect. Nor did the Spaniards fail to notice the doubtful prospects of the promised French alliance. Rather suddenly at last, on the 28th of October, the two Ministers signed a Convention, by which it was agreed that the lands and buildings of which British subjects had been dispossessed in North America should be restored to them; that British subjects should not be disturbed or molested in carrying on their fisheries in the South Seas, or in making settlements for the purpose of commerce on the coasts of those seas in places not already occupied; and that on the other hand the King of Britain should engage to take the most effectual measures that these fisheries should not be made a pretext for illicit trade with the Spanish settlements; and with that view it was farther stipulated that British sub-

jects should not carry on their fisheries within ten leagues from any part of the coast already occupied by Spain.

By these means was this painful transaction, arising from a most wanton outrage, happily concluded without any actual appeal to arms. The gentlemen in Opposition might endeavour, when the Houses met again, to censure the Convention as not sufficiently definite and ample in its terms; but they certainly found no echo on either side of the Channel. In England the Parliament pronounced, and the people felt, that both the honour and the interests of the nation had been worthily maintained. On the Continent the reputation of the English Cabinet, high already, was still further exalted. We may observe Lord Auckland, at that time the ambassador at the Hague, write to Mr. Pitt as follows: —"I am convinced that if less firmness, energy, and activity had been shown on our part, or even that if our fleet had not been found in the readiest and most perfect state that has been known in the annals of Great Britain, the reparation made to us would have been incomplete. . . . . In short, there never was a business better conducted or better concluded, and there never was a moment in which our country held such pre-eminency among nations."

The vigilant attention which Mr. Pitt gave to the conduct of our Foreign policy did not relax after the pacific arrangement with Spain. The affairs of France, and their growing influence on the affairs of England, claimed on the contrary his most earnest care.

Through the year 1790 the National Assembly con-

tinued to hold their sittings at Paris. Certainly they had abolished or reformed some grievous abuses. As certainly they had swept away some useful institutions. But besides the merit or demerit of their votes, there were many points in their deliberations to cause at the least surprise. All their favourite arguments were derived in the manner of Rousseau from what man might do, or desire to do, in his primitive condition as they assumed it to be—the wild hunting state. Of practical experience they were utterly regardless, at least until it came too late to help them. Thus their usual course was to assume instead of ascertaining facts. Even the few men of real genius, such as Mirabeau, who appeared among them at this juncture, were compelled in great measure to adopt the follies of those whom they sought to guide.

Against the doctrines then in vogue there were strong interests and also strong feelings arrayed. The chief nobles, and, as we should call them, country-gentlemen, had emigrated from the kingdom—at their head the King's youngest brother, Charles Comte d'Artois, who fixed his head-quarters at Coblentz. The most respectable members of the clergy might have acquiesced in the confiscation of their domains, but they could not brook the new Ecclesiastical Constitution which was decreed by the Assembly, and which made in fact a schism in the Church. Moneyed men were offended and alarmed at the profuse issue of *assignats*, the new paper circulation based upon the confiscated lands. Loyal subjects viewed with bitter anguish the danger and degradation of their King; but on the other side there was the

rising ferment of the masses—of those who had little to lose and everything to gain.

In England the French Revolution had found a considerable number of friends, who caught much of its violence, and became more and more ardent as it proceeded. There were at this time among us two small bodies, which excited far more attention than their importance appears to have deserved. The first bore the name of the Constitutional Society: it had been formed some years earlier for the diffusion of useful books, but now desired to manifest its sympathy with France. The other was a club, till then of little note, which called itself the Revolution Society, and which had a yearly festival in commemoration of the events of 1688. This Society had been new-modelled and enlarged with a view to the transactions at Paris, but still retained its former name to imply a close connection between the principles of 1688 in England, and the principles of 1789 in France. On the 4th of November, 1789, it had held its anniversary meeting at the London Tavern, with Earl Stanhope in the Chair. The members then proceeded to a meeting-house in the Old Jewry, where they heard a sermon or discourse from Dr. Price, denouncing in inflammatory terms "all supporters of slavish governments and slavish hierarchies." Next they carried an Address of congratulation to the National Assembly, framed by Dr. Price as mover, and signed by Lord Stanhope as Chairman. This Address being in due course transmitted to Paris, was received with much enthusiasm, and acknowledged by a vote of the Assembly. Meanwhile the proceedings

of the two Societies, but especially the latter, and, above all, the discourse of Dr. Price at the Old Jewry, afforded a large scope to the eloquence of Burke.

Burke, as we have already seen, took the occasion of the Army Estimates in February, 1790, to condemn in strong terms the course and tendency of the events at Paris. But feeling himself called upon to make a further effort, he began to indite a more careful composition on the same subject. The fruit of his labours appeared in October of the same year, and was entitled "Reflections on the Revolution in France." This masterly essay had been for some time announced, and the expectations of the public had been highly raised; but these expectations were much more than fulfilled. In his argument Burke chiefly applied himself to answer the assertions of Dr. Price, and to point out the essential difference in principle between the English and the French Revolutions. Argument, however, did not in this essay stand alone; everywhere it was enforced and adorned—sometimes, perhaps, warped and drawn aside—by the creations of a most brilliant fancy. And among the beautiful illustrations which Burke so profusely pours forth, there is none better known, or better deserving to be so, than his picture of the Queen Marie Antoinette as sixteen years before he had seen her at Versailles "glittering like the morning star, full of life and splendour and joy; but," he added, bitterly, "the age of chivalry is gone; that of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever!"

It was this passage which, in an especial degree, roused the wrath of Burke's opponents. Philip Francis might flippantly ask him: "Are you such a determined champion of beauty as to draw your sword in defence of any jade upon earth, provided she be handsome?"[4] Many others of inferior note, while carping at Burke's expression of "the age of chivalry," seemed never to have heard of any other knight besides Don Quixote. Thus, in hopes of assailing Burke, they borrowed, and they spoiled in borrowing, the satire of Cervantes. Others again took great exception to a subsequent phrase, where Burke expresses his alarm that "along with its natural guardians and protectors learning will be cast into the mire, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude." It is plain from the context that Burke desired to speak only of such rabble as had dragged their prisoners to *La Lanterne*, and yelled for the blood of their Queen. But misrepresentation ever follows close in the wake of genius, and the phrase of "a swinish multitude" was now busily held forth as the grossest of insults to the lower or the labouring classes.[5]

This essay, though never offered to the public for a less price than five shillings, is said, perhaps with some exaggeration, to have reached in its sale the as yet unprecedented number of 30,000 copies. Immense certainly was the impression which it made. That impression is to be traced alike on Burke's friends and on his foes. The graduates of two great Universities (Oxford and Dublin) sent him their tokens of high

[4] Correspondence of Burke, vol. iii. p. 131.

[5] See a note in Prior's Life of Burke, p. 319, ed. 1854.

respect. The French Princes at Coblentz, and the other leading men of the Royalist party, conveyed, either in messages or letters, their warmest thanks. Only a few months afterwards, when his son had gone to Brussels, and was attending an assembly at the Marquis de la Quenille's, the chief among the Emigrants at that place, he found, as he says, to his surprise, a circle gather round him with every mark of honour, while M. de la Quenille thus addressed him: "You see, Sir, the eagerness of these gentlemen to express to you how much all good Frenchmen owe to your illustrious father."[6] On the other hand, the partisans of the French Revolution, both abroad and at home, manifested their disappointment and vexation in every form. The essay of Burke became a favourite topic of invective with the Jacobin Club of Paris. There even the Bible itself was not more frequently scoffed at. In England the halls of debating societies resounded with orations, and the newspapers were filled with paragraphs, denouncing the great statesman as the friend of tyrants, and the champion of abuses. Many men of various merits published essays in reply, either to his speech on the Army Estimates, or to his "Reflections." Among these writers may be mentioned Dr. Priestley, Mr. Capel Lofft, and Lord Stanhope, and above all Mr. Mackintosh, afterwards Sir James. His work on this occasion, the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, though marked by some faults of youth and of party-spirit, gave high promise of future distinction.

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[6] Correspondence of Burke, vol. iii. p. 242.

It would not be just to class any of these writers with another, though on the same subject, and at the same period—Thomas Paine. I have related in another work his first appearance in America in 1774, and his first publication in 1776, entitled "Common Sense." That publication had there produced a strong effect. He had been not only praised by the popular leaders, but rewarded with grants of land. But by degrees he had become better known, and of course less esteemed. Finally, finding himself fallen into obscurity, he had returned to Europe towards the year 1787. There the troubles first of Holland, and next of France, had attracted his attention. The work which he now put forth in answer to Burke was called "The Rights of Man." Coarse and ungrammatical in its language—as where it inveighs against "the Quixote age of chivalry nonsense"—it was, however, commended to many readers by its bold and thorough-going tone. Thus, for example, it denounces not only rank and title, but hereditary monarchy at least, if not all monarchy, as manifest abuses.

That Mr. Burke was sometimes blinded and betrayed by his own ardent imagination—that this essay, and still more perhaps the essays that followed it, contain great exaggerations—seems to me no unfounded charge. It will come out more plainly if we compare the views of Mr. Burke in 1790 and 1791 with the views of Mr. Pitt. While condemning the excesses of the French Revolution, even at that early period, and apprehending its results, Pitt never lost the hope that among the friends of that Revolution the more moderate party

might prevail. In public he held forth as the rule of his administration strict neutrality as to the internal contests; in private, he moreover sought, as we have seen through divers and not only diplomatic channels, to exchange pacific explanations with the leaders of the popular party; and he was determined to maintain against all obstacles, as long as possible, that peace so essential to the welfare of his country, and on which depended his own course of financial retrenchments and reforms. The voice of Burke, on the contrary, was for open war. Hold no intercourse with rebels! Make no terms with traitors! Appeal to neighbouring Sovereigns, and place your main reliance on the aid of foreign armies! Such was the tone of Mr. Burke even in the last months of 1790. And in consequence we find him also dissatisfied and murmuring at the line of Mr. Pitt.[7]

But does it follow, from this divergence, that we are bound to censure one or other of these two great men? Observe how different their positions at the time. Mr. Pitt was a powerful Minister, responsible for the peace of the world. Mr. Burke was an eloquent essayist, anxious above all things to rouse the spirit of the people. And in the latter point of view, if we consider Mr. Burke as addressing not merely one European nation, but all, may not even his unconscious exaggerations have been one cause of his great success? The bow had been so strongly bent in one direction, that to

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[7] See in Burke's Correspondence especially, vol. iii. pp. 183, 267, and 286.

bring it straight again, there was need to bend it almost as strongly in the other. Against the enthusiasm of "this new political religion," as it is well termed by Etienne Dumont, and against the fiery zeal of its apostles, no mere cold statements of reason and duty might perhaps have sufficed. It might perhaps be requisite to evoke something of new enthusiasm, or something of old chivalry, upon the other side. Certainly it was no light crisis which could induce the writer whom I just now cited—no enemy of large reforms, but Etienne Dumont, the commentator upon Bentham—and that at no moment of heat, but many years afterwards on a calm retrospect of all the circumstances—to use these memorable words: "It is possible that the essay of Burke may have been the salvation of Europe." [8]

[8] Souvenirs sur Mirabeau, p. 95, ed. Bruxelles, 1832.

CHAPTER XIV.

1790—1791.

Meeting of the new Parliament — Grenville created a Peer — Duke of Richmond's letter of complaint — The Budget — Trial of Hastings — Testimony of Wilberforce and Burke to Pitt's eloquence — Reappearance of Erskine in Parliament — The King offers Pitt the Garter, which he declines — Wilberforce's motion on the Slave Trade — India and Canada — Dissension between Fox and Burke — Rights of Juries — Bill in favour of Roman Catholics — Pitt's first check in foreign policy: the Russian armament — Retrospect of events in Turkey — And in Sweden.

THE meeting of the new Parliament had been fixed for the 25th of November. Previously, however, Pitt took a careful review of his position. In the Commons he had no reason to doubt his continued ascendency; but in the Lords there was a stumbling-block from the wayward temper of Thurlow. Although the Chancellor was charged, or supposed to be charged, with the conduct of the Government business in the Upper House, Mr. Pitt declared that he was never quite certain what part in debate would be taken by his Lordship. Even when he forbore from insidious opposition, he gave no real aid. During the whole Session of 1790, says his biographer, "he never, except on one occasion, opened his mouth."[1]

[1] Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p. 602.

Under such circumstances Pitt resolved to place among the Peers as leader some adherent on whom he could thoroughly rely. With that view he selected his cousin William Grenville, the newly-appointed Secretary of State, whom he proposed to the King to create Lord Grenville. The answer of His Majesty is dated the 21st of November. He readily agreed to the proposed arrangement, expecting, as he says, that the conciliatory temper of Mr. Grenville would aid in keeping matters smooth with the Chancellor. But His Majesty's expectations were by no means fulfilled.

Two letters of Pitt to his mother at this period are written with evident pleasure—the one announcing the pacification with Spain, and the other the peerage to Grenville.

"Downing Street, Nov. 5, 1790.

"My dear Mother,

"I am impatient to send you as early as possible the satisfactory news which we received this morning that everything is at length settled on the subject of our disputes with Spain exactly in the manner we wished. Mr. Fitzherbert had brought the Spanish Minister to consent, on the 24th of last month, to a Convention acceding to all our terms; and it was settled that it should be signed in three days from that time. Among a thousand reasons for rejoicing in this event, it is not one of the last which occurs to me that it will give both my brother and myself a chance of still reaching Burton for a few days before the Session, and that we shall feel no mixture of anxiety in doing so. You will imagine, however, that, though our business has taken so agreeable a turn, the pressure of it is not for the

moment diminished, and you will therefore not wonder at the haste of this letter.

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

"Downing Street, Nov. 24, 1790.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I have a piece of news to communicate to-day which will, I believe, be very unexpected, but not unwelcome.

"It is that Grenville has just kissed hands on being removed to the House of Lords, where there are many reasons for wishing his assistance as Home Secretary of State. By the help of this arrangement, I think we shall open the new Parliament with more strength than has belonged to us since the beginning of the Government; and it is a very pleasant circumstance in the business that all parts of Government are highly satisfied with the measure, and that those who please themselves with the reports which you will see of divisions among us will find themselves completely disappointed.

"You will not have wondered that I found it not so easy as I imagined and hoped to accomplish my excursion before the beginning of the Session. I must now look to the Christmas holidays, when I think myself very sure of being at liberty.

"I must not add more, as I have barely had time for what I have written since coming from St. James's, and before sitting down to a formal dinner which always precedes the opening of the Session.

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

Mr. Pitt, however, was much mistaken when he

thought himself able to announce "that all parts of Government are highly satisfied with the measure." On the same day that he wrote to Lady Chatham, the Duke of Richmond wrote to him. That letter of complaint—very able and very angry—I shall here insert at length.

"Goodwood, Nov. 24, 1790.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I cannot but very much regret that Mr. Grenville's being called up to the House of Lords appeared to you to press for such an immediate decision as to prevent the wish you had of conversing with me upon the subject from taking place, because I should at least have had an opportunity of previously giving you my most serious advice not to adopt a plan which to me seems likely to be attended with many bad consequences.

"I must conclude from your letter as well as from all the circumstances attending this measure, that it will have been carried into execution before my answer can reach you. But I will take my chance of the possibility of a delay, and state to you fairly some of the principal objections that strike me.

"In the first place, I think it ruin to Mr. Grenville. He has in the space of a very few years gone through many great offices, and now holds the second political situation in the House of Commons. In case of any accident happening to you or your brother, he would naturally become the first servant of the Crown in that House; and the circumstances of the times, joined to his own abilities, justify, in the eyes of the public, his being where he is. But, by removing him from the House of Commons, you deprive him of all the prospects of future advantages which talents

can make their way to in that place. He now stands in every light in an advantageous situation both for himself and for his friends: is it then wise to risk a change? He has succeeded admirably well hitherto; but it may be very uncertain whether he will succeed so well in another situation, certainly a very different one from that which he is now in. To call up a younger brother to the House of Peers for the evident purpose of giving him the lead there, is a degree of reflection upon the whole House of Lords that there is no one there fit for such a situation, which will be felt, and may cause him to fail in that for which alone you place him there.

"If this should be the case, or by any other means a change happen, a Lord Grenville without a fortune would be but a poor situation!

"But of all this, to be sure, Mr. Grenville must be the best judge; and I must suppose that he likes the risking all this for the sake of being made a Peer and having the lead in the House of Lords, rather than remain second in the House of Commons. For whatever his attachment may be to you, no man with that laudable degree of ambition which Mr. Grenville has, can be supposed to hazard such an entire political sacrifice of himself as he is exposing himself to without he saw some considerable gratification to himself in so doing. But the wisest men have their weaknesses, and I fear this is a very fatal one in Mr. Grenville. However, since it is his choice, there is nothing more to be said upon his account; but on your account and that of the permanency of the present Government, in which the King's happiness and the prosperity of the kingdom are, I think, deeply interested, I do apprehend the worst consequences.

"It would be inconsistent with the friendship I

trust I have upon all occasions shown you, and with the fairness I will always act with, not to say that I believe this country will not be satisfied to see you two younger brothers take the lead of the two Houses of Parliament, and by yourselves govern the country. With your abilities—which, without a compliment, are very transcending—you may take that lead in the House of Commons; but Mr. Grenville, whose parts, however solid and useful, are certainly not upon a level with yours, cannot, as I conceive, succeed in taking the lead in the House of Lords, where something of higher rank and more fortune and dignity is required; and I do apprehend that both of you being in such situations, so nearly related with Lord Chatham at the Admiralty, will be thought engrossing too much in one family. You will consider, too, that at the same time that you deprive yourself of Mr. Grenville's support and that of a Cabinet Minister in the House of Commons, which was the reason for which you made him Secretary of State, and thereby remain almost singly there as to speakers of any weight, you will place Mr. Grenville as singly in the House of Lords. The Duke of Leeds, who never took a very active part in debates, will probably not be very desirous of standing forward when he is so evidently set aside. Lord Chatham has never yet spoken. Lord Camden is idle, and grows old. Lord Stafford will seldom speak, and but a few words. Your account of the Chancellor makes it more likely that he will be adverse than otherwise; and as to myself, I must confess that I do not see how I can be of any use. It is not, therefore, from your Cabinet that Mr. Grenville can derive much support, and I do not imagine that Lord Hawkesbury will feel much disposed to act under him. There remains Lord Walsingham, and the chance

of what the Duke of Montrose may turn out as a speaker in the House of Lords.

"This against the present speakers in Opposition, and possibly the Chancellor, will form but a poor line of debaters to defend the errors of Government that, from the present way of carrying on business, unavoidably arise, and which it falls to the lot of the House of Lords to be afterwards obliged to support.

"I have said that I could be of little use; perhaps in no situation could I have been of much; but to be of any as a speaker, a man must feel something for himself, and not appear to the world in an unbecoming situation. I trust I have not shown myself a difficult man when, after having had for many years a considerable share in the debates in the House of Lords, I first wished to support your Government as an individual, and afterwards defended your measures as a Minister under Lord Sydney and the Duke of Leeds. But to continue to act a second part under every change, and particularly under one which is avowedly made for the sole purpose of giving the House of Lords another leader, would be depriving myself of every sort of consideration which I may hope to have in that House, and rendering myself totally useless there.

"I must say, too, that, after having been of late so particularly called upon to take a very active part in a business of some consequence where it was thought I could be useful, and having shown a disposition to accommodate, as far as it was possible, my situation to your wishes, I cannot but feel myself somewhat neglected by your deciding upon this measure without my consent or even knowledge; for when we conversed on this subject some time ago, I had expressed my objections to it, and afterwards understood you had

entirely dropped the idea. You will also recollect my having often expressed that, although I feel very little interest in the disposal of employments or the making of Peers, yet I could not think it right that your colleagues of the Cabinet should never hear of what is doing in these respects till the things were done. Those with whom I have formerly been connected in politics and in friendship used to treat me with more attention; and, indifferent as I am upon those subjects in general, I cannot be entirely so when they tend to prevent me from being of that use, though small, which otherwise I might possibly be of in the House of Lords to the King's administration of which I have the honour to form a part.

"If I had any political ambition, I might feel disappointed and hurt at such a conduct; but having none, it only adds to that desire of retiring from public business which you know I have long had in view. In so doing I shall endeavour not to give it the appearance of any dissatisfaction with you, for in truth I feel none, believing, as I do, that your conduct does not proceed from any intentional want of kindness towards me, but from (you must forgive me for saying so) an idleness in your disposition that too often makes you neglect to cultivate the friendship of those who are most attached to you, and which makes you expose your judgment to be biassed by the opinion of the narrow circle to which you confine your intimacy.

"I have before observed that I think Mr. Grenville must have some strong predilection for this measure, and perhaps Mr. Dundas, whom you mention to have had some concern, at least, in what has led to it, may not be sorry to have Mr. Grenville out of his way in the House of Commons. The hurry and manner in

which this business was conducted, not allowing twelve hours for the return of your messenger, lead me to these suspicions; and, as the French say, I doubt your religion and good sense have been surprised. But of all things this is a measure the least calculated to conciliate the Chancellor, who is not fond of Mr. Grenville, and who, with some reason, will think he ought to have been consulted as to the person who is to have the lead in the House of Lords. But perhaps Mr. Grenville and Mr. Dundas, who know that the Chancellor does not like either of them, may not be sorry to force him out. I wish this may not end in breaking up that administration on which they both depend.

"With every sincere wish for your prosperity,

"I am, my dear Sir, &c.

"RICHMOND."

Commencing in November, 1790, and closing in June, 1791, the first Session of the new Parliament comprised many important debates. Within three weeks of the meeting Pitt brought forward his Budget for the year. It was no longer like his Budget of the 19th of April last, a picture of unmixed prosperity. Then he might express his satisfaction that the average income of the country for the last two years, amounting to sixteen millions and a quarter, had exceeded his own estimate which the Opposition had formerly censured as too high. He might point out that, since 1786, various extraordinary expenses beyond the regular peace establishment, and calculated at six millions, had been defrayed with the assistance of a loan

of only one million, while within that period more than five millions of the National Debt had been paid off. "The country at this moment," Mr. Pitt might then conclude, "is in a state of prosperity far greater than at any period, even the most flourishing, before the last war; and this I can incontestably prove from a comparative view of the exports and imports of that period compared with those of the present"—so fully and so rapidly had the loss of the American colonies, deemed irreparable by all our wisest statesmen, been repaired.

Such, then, was the picture which the Prime Minister could draw in April, 1790. But in the December following he had the more painful task of computing and providing for the expense of the recent armament. All included it came to no less a sum than 3,133,000*l.* Mr. Pitt, relying, as he justly might, on the buoyancy of the national resources, determined that this sum should not remain as a permanent addition to the national debt. Accordingly he had framed a scheme for paying off the whole, principal and interest, within four years by the aid of temporary taxes. He proposed new duties, some to endure four years and others only two, upon spirits, sugar, malt, and other articles. He also desired that the public should for the first time derive some advantage from the large balance of unclaimed dividends remaining at the Bank of England. In 1727 that balance had been only 43,000*l.*; in October, 1790, it had grown to 660,000*l.* Surely, said Mr. Pitt, it would be fair and right to apply half a million of this balance towards the discharge of the

debts incurred by the late armament, making the Consolidated Fund answerable for those dividends if at any time they should be claimed. By this measure the nation would obtain the immediate use of half a million without interest, while the security of the national creditor would be in no degree lessened or impaired.

This scheme, which was unfolded by Pitt in a luminous speech, was received with general assent, excepting only the proposal as to the unclaimed dividends. Fears were expressed lest it should "give a stab to public credit"—lest the fundholders, neglecting to inform themselves, should suppose their security lessened. Finally it was arranged that, instead of the Government taking directly any proportion of the unclaimed dividends, the Bank Directors should lend half a million without interest, thus giving to the public exactly the same advantage as the first scheme contemplated.

The Trial of Hastings was another subject which gave rise to long debates. Here the question raised was whether in law and form the Dissolution of Parliament put an end to an impeachment before the House of Lords. On this point the lawyers might revel in a long array of doubtful precedents. And among themselves the best opinions were much divided. As against the Abatement might be cited the great names of Camden and Mansfield; as for it names of scarcely inferior legal eminence, Thurlow and Kenyon. But while the heads of the law were thus at issue, there was much more of unanimity among the leading statesmen;

for while Fox and Burke, and Sheridan and Grey eagerly pressed forward the Impeachment, Pitt and Dundas in long and argumentative speeches threw their weight into the same scale.

The speech of Pitt on this occasion is commemorated by Wilberforce with high praise. "This was almost the finest speech Pitt ever delivered. It was one which you would say at once he never could have made if he had not been a mathematician. He put things by as he proceeded, and then returned to the very point from which he had started with the most astonishing clearness."[2]

Burke also was greatly pleased with this speech. "Sir," he said, "the Right Hon. gentleman and I have often been opposed to one another, but his speech to-night has neutralized my opposition; nay, Sir, he has dulcified me."

Erskine, who had now returned to Parliament as member for Portsmouth, espoused with vehemence, and in opposition to all his friends, the side of the Abatement. His long speech on this occasion appears to have borne no traces of his wonderful genius at the Bar. He acknowledged that in these debates he did not feel "at home;" and he drew down upon himself some biting taunts from Burke. "The learned gentleman," said Burke, "has declared himself nervous, and has modestly declined all claim to eloquence. Why should the learned gentleman decline that to which all the world allows him entitled, and to which alone he

[2] Life of Wilberforce, by his Sons, vol. i. p. 286.

has had recourse in the present debate? It is plain he trusted in that, and in that only. He confesses that he has not examined the Journals of the House of Commons; and is pleased to assert, that he had no access to those of the other House, which nevertheless are printed and accessible to the whole world. He only produced in his hand a pamphlet, to whose contents if he trusted to supply him with argument, it is not easy to see on what he could possibly rely except his own eloquence. . . . . For my part I must own that I wish the country to be governed by law, but not by lawyers!" [3]

Thus did Erskine recommence his career in Parliament—certainly under no favourable auspices. He continued in the following years to speak on various subjects, but seldom with any success. And while thus by his Parliamentary exertions he could render little service to his friends in public life, he was further apt to wear out their patience, even in private converse, by his most garrulous though ever good-humoured vanity. "Recollect"—thus writes Fox to Grey—"the impossibility when Erskine was in his most talkative vein of any thing like deliberation." [4] Still far more contemptuous is the character drawn of him by Fox's nephew and Erskine's own Cabinet colleague. "He talked much nonsense:" this is

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[3] Two speeches of Mr. Burke, both Dec. 23, 1790.

[4] Letter dated 1799, and published in the Memorials of Fox, vol. iii. p. 293.

among the smaller imputations which Lord Holland conveys.[5]

So far as regards the subject of the Non-Abatement in December, 1790 the unexpected aid of Erskine to the friends of Hastings had no effect. The union of all the great statesmen in the House of Commons prevailed; and the continuance of the Trial was voted by overwhelming numbers.

There were also before Christmas and in both Houses long debates on the recent Convention with Spain. Addresses in approval of it were carried by very large majorities—in the Peers by 73 votes against 30, and in the Commons by 247 against 123. So much time was taken up in these manifold discussions that the early part of the Session continued till the 29th of December. Then the Houses adjourned till the beginning of February. Then also Pitt set off on a visit to Burton Pynsent.

By the votes of both Houses the Spanish affair was now successfully concluded. For his part in the negotiation Mr. Fitzherbert was raised to the Irish peerage as Lord St. Helens: he survived till 1839. A more splendid reward was designed for Mr. Pitt. The King had for some time past desired to invest him with the Garter; and he renewed the offer of it on this occasion. But it was respectfully declined by the Minister—the only instance, so far as I know, since the Revolution, besides that of Sir Robert Peel,

[5] Memoirs by Henry Lord Holland, and especially one passage, vol. ii. p. 184.

in which a Commoner has been offered and has refused this prize; and a striking contrast to the eagerness with which it often has been sought and solicited by many great Peers. Pitt, however, obtained the Royal permission to bestow it on his brother, Lord Chatham.[6]

On the assembling of the Houses in February the Trial of Hastings did not, as was hoped, make any rapid progress. The Lords were very deliberate in deciding the point of Non-Abatement. On receiving a communication from the other House, they appointed in the first place a Committee to search for precedents; a favourite course with both Houses, especially, perhaps, when it is known that no precedents at all are to be found. It was not till the 16th of May that Lord Porchester moved and carried by a large majority a Resolution as follows:—"That a Message be sent to acquaint the Commons that this House is ready to proceed in the Trial of Warren Hastings."

Even thus, so far as regarded any active progress in the Trial, the whole, or nearly the whole, of this Session was already consumed. Nor could it fail to be noticed that the hearing of only three out of the twenty Charges sent up to the House of Lords had taken up three years. At that rate, and allowing also a proportionate time for the defence, scarcely one of the promoters of the first Impeachment would have survived to see its termination. Under these circumstances Mr. Burke on the 14th of February brought

[6] See at the close of the volume the notes from the King to Mr. Pitt, dated Dec. 12, 13, and 14, 1790.

forward a motion to limit the prosecution to a single Charge more, namely, that relating to contracts, pensions, and allowances. The motion was opposed by Major Scott and other partisans of Hastings, whose desire was to bring the Trial to an immediate close; but it obtained the support of Mr. Pitt, and was carried by an immense majority. The hopes of the Managers were once again revived. It was thought that the ardour of politics might—as sometimes, though rarely, happens—overcome the slowness of the law.

Of late the steps for the Abolition of the Slave Trade had been almost as tardy as those for the Trial of Hastings. The whole of the preceding and a great part of the present Session had been taken up in the examination of witnesses, which Mr. Wilberforce could not prevent, which he indeed desired, but which in its result served only to perplex and overlay the question. Under cover of these conflicting testimonies, Members of Parliament found themselves much freer than before to vote as the interests of the Liverpool merchants or of the Jamaica planters might incline them. There were other discouragements also. The extravagances of the Jacobin Club at Paris, and of Thomas Paine in his "Rights of Man," were insidiously ascribed to the friends of Abolition by its enemies. With better reason might they point to the rising ferment of the West India slaves—to the revolution which had already commenced in St. Domingo, and was marked by horrible reprisals of the Blacks against the Whites.[7]

[7] Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, vol. ii. pp. 208-212.

It was under such unfavourable circumstances that Mr. Wilberforce on the 18th of April moved for leave to bring in a Bill to prevent the further importation of slaves into the British Colonies in the West Indies. The debate lasted two days. Pitt and Fox, for once on the same side, put forth all their powers. Nor was it wholly without effect even so far as the immediate numbers were concerned. Two young Members of Parliament—Mr. John Thomas Stanley, afterwards Lord Stanley of Alderley, and Mr. Dudley Ryder, afterwards Earl of Harrowby—declared, much to their honour, that they had hitherto been adverse or in doubt as regarded the Abolition of Slavery, but should now give hearty votes in its favour. On the whole, however, the majority against it was immense; the Noes being 163, and the Yeas but 88.

Both India and Canada were in this Session subjects of debate. In 1790 Lord Cornwallis had found it necessary to declare war against Tippoo, Sultan of Mysore. During that year General Medows at the head of 15,000 men gained several advantages. But early in 1791 Lord Cornwallis took the field in person. He besieged and took the town and fort of Bangalore, the second place in importance of Tippoo's kingdom; and pursuing his march until near the outworks of the first, Seringapatam, he there gained a victory over Tippoo himself. But he did not consider his force sufficient to reduce the capital, defended as it was by extensive fortifications; and thus the conclusion of the war was reserved for another campaign.

In the House of Commons, and in February 1791,

Philip Francis brought forward some Resolutions tending to a censure of the war. They were opposed by Dundas and Pitt, and rejected without a division. Not satisfied with this negative victory, Dundas two days afterwards moved, without making a single preliminary observation, other Resolutions in approval of the war. Fox and Francis made some angry speeches, but did not venture to divide.

A Bill for the better government of Canada was brought forward by Mr. Pitt. Since the conquest of 1759, and still more since the Act of 1774, there had been great and growing differences between the new English settlers and the old French inhabitants; the latter in general stationed at or near Quebec, while the former, for the most part, proceeded higher up the stream. It was now proposed to divide the province into two parts, under the denominations of Upper and Lower Canada; the Upper for the English and American settlers, the Lower for the French Canadians, and with a local legislature to each part. "This division," said Pitt, "could, I hope, be made in such a manner as to give each a great majority in their own particular share, although it cannot be expected to draw a line of complete separation. Any inconveniences to be apprehended from ancient Canadians being included in the one, or British settlers in the other; would be remedied by the double legislature which I seek to establish, by appointing in each a House of Assembly, and a Council, so as to give them the full advantages of the British Constitution. . . . . If the province were not to be divided, there would be only

one House of Assembly; and there being two parties, if these parties had been equal, or nearly equal, in the Assembly, it would have been the source of perpetual faction; while if one party had been much stronger than the other, the minority might not without some justice call itself oppressed." [8]

Besides this division of the province, which might be regarded as the main feature of the scheme, there were other clauses providing that the descendants of those on whom the King might bestow hereditary titles should hold hereditary seats in the Council, and that there should be a permanent appropriation of lands for the maintenance of the Protestant Clergy. To the first introduction of this measure Fox offered no resistance. And there fell from him on this occasion a maxim which has of late become almost a settled rule in our Colonial government, but which, in 1791, it required both discernment to perceive and courage to avow. "I do not hesitate to say," said Fox, "that if a local legislature be liberally formed, that circumstance would much incline me to overlook defects in the other regulations; because I am convinced that the only method of retaining distant Colonies with advantage is to enable them to govern themselves."

It was not till after the Committee that the opposition of Fox began. With his usual powers of eloquence, he pointed out some strong objections to the scheme of Clergy Reserves; and while lauding the principle of aristocracy in the government of England, denied that

[8] Speeches of Mr. Pitt, March 4 and April 8, 1791.

it was applicable to the government of Canada. Notwithstanding his arguments, the Bill—like most other Bills opposed by Fox at this juncture—was carried with little alteration through both Houses. But it is worthy of note that one argument of Fox, though not allowed in theory, has prevailed in practice. For although the Bill did enable the Sovereign to grant hereditary honours in the province of Canada, not one such hereditary honour was in fact conferred.

The progress of this Bill, however, was fraught with an interest far beyond its own. It was made memorable by a collateral incident which it produced—by the utter breach and lasting estrangement of the two great leaders of the Opposition ranks.

In arguing against the Canada Bill, Fox had not scrupled to draw some illustrations from the recent changes in France; nor had he forborne from some reflections—or what seemed so—on the recent writings of Burke. A debate on a different subject, to which I shall presently come, the Russian armament, had given Fox another opportunity for going over the same ground. On this second occasion, Burke, who was not present on the first, had risen with signs of strong emotion; but the hour being late, and the House exhausted, he was stopped by loud cries of "Question!" chiefly from the friends of Fox. At a later period Fox is known to have regretted the injudicious zeal of those who would not allow Burke to answer his remarks upon the spot. "The contention," he said, "might have been fiercer and hotter, but the remembrance of it would not have settled so deep and rankled so long."

It is however certain, though Fox's ill-wishers might sometimes maintain the contrary, that Fox had no intention to insult or wound his friend. On the contrary, he appears to have regretted that the ardour of debate had hurried him too far. On the day that had been fixed for the re-commitment of the Canada Bill, he, in company with a common friend, paid a visit to Burke. Something of their old cordiality seemed to revive between them. A political circumstance of great delicacy was mentioned and discussed—a report, namely, that the King had let fall some expressions favourable to Mr. Fox. Burke made no secret of the topics which he designed to use for his own defence in the House of Commons; and Fox expressed the wish that at least the discussion might not take place on the re-commitment of the Canada Bill; but Burke declared that he could not consent to forego an opportunity which he could not hope to find again in any other business then before Parliament, or likely to come before it. Notwithstanding this refusal no present breach of friendship ensued. At the close of their conversation the two statesmen walked to Westminster together, and together entered the House. It was the last time in their lives that they were thus arm in arm or hand in hand.[9]

On entering the House of Commons the two statesmen found that Sheridan had, in the mean time, moved the adjournment of the discussion until after the Easter

[9] In my account of this transaction I have closely followed a passage in the Annual Register for 1791 (pp. 114–118), which was certainly drawn up under Burke's direction, and perhaps in some part even by Burke himself.

holidays, to which Pitt had agreed. Both Fox and Burke said a few words, the latter announcing that at the next opportunity, that is on the 6th of May, he should be prepared to explain himself fully on the affairs of France.

On the 6th of May accordingly the expectation of the House was wound up to the highest pitch. But by that time the friends of Fox had discovered that it was highly irregular and blameable to foist reflections upon France into debates upon Canada. This irregularity, which had not struck them while the practice was continued by Fox, appeared to them in the strongest light the moment a reply was announced by Burke. When, therefore, on the 6th of May, Burke rose in his place, and was proceeding with solemn earnestness to inveigh against the error and evil of the French Revolution, there appeared a fixed design to interrupt him. Member after Member from his own, the Opposition side, started up to call him to Order. First, there was Mr. Baker, a country gentleman of considerable note, from Hertfordshire. Next came a Member who also took some part in the debates, Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor. Others of the rank and file followed, and a tumultuous scene ensued. There was, as Burke said, a most disorderly rage for Order. When, at last, he was suffered in some measure to proceed, chafed and goaded as he had been, and even at length by Fox among the rest, he, no doubt, spoke against "the Right Hon. gentleman" (for now he dropped the name of friend) much more bitterly and strongly than he had at first designed. "Certainly," he said, "it is indiscreet at any period, but especially

at my time of life, to provoke enemies, or give my friends occasion to desert me. Yet, if my firm and steady adherence to the British Constitution place me in such a dilemma, I am ready to risk all, and with my last words to exclaim—'Fly from the French Constitution!'" Fox here whispered across to him that there was no loss of friends. "Yes," rejoined Burke; "yes, there is a loss of friends. I know the price of my conduct. I have done my duty at the price of my friend. Our friendship is at an end."

When Burke, after some further impassioned bursts of eloquence, had sat down, Fox rose to reply. But his mind was so painfully affected by what had passed, that for some minutes he was unable to proceed. Tears rolled down his cheeks, and he strove in vain to give utterance to his thoughts. The whole House seemed to sympathize with this generous gush of feeling, and many eyes were moistened besides his own.[1] Recovering himself at last, he adverted with manly and becoming tenderness to the Right Hon. gentleman so lately his familiar friend. He repeated what he had said in the preceding year, that he had learned more from Mr. Burke than from all books and all other men put together. All his political knowledge was derived from Mr. Burke's writings, speeches, or familiar conversation, and his severance from a man to whom he owed so many obligations would be painful to him to the last hour of his life. Still, however, he was bound to avow

[1] See Moore's Life of Sheridan, from the information "of persons who were in the Gallery at the time" (vol. ii. p. 125). "Fox," it is added, "wept even to sobbing."

his opinions on public affairs, and he must look upon the French Constitution as a most stupendous and glorious fabric of liberty. The old despotism was annihilated; the new system had the good of the people for its object; and that was the point on which he took his stand.

Still untired, Burke rose again and spoke once more with augmented vehemence, denouncing the new French Constitution as no stupendous or glorious fabric, but rather "as a building composed of untempered mortar—as the work of Goths and Vandals, where everything was disjointed and inverted." Fox made yet another short reply, and thus the discussion ended. And thus ended also a friendship of twenty-five years—a friendship fraught with great results on the politics of England, and renowned throughout the world—a friendship which the Revolution in America cemented, and the Revolution of France broke asunder.

In this memorable quarrel, which had been for some time foreseen as impending, there were many of the Whigs disposed in secret to sympathize with Burke. Such, for example, was the tendency of the Duke of Portland, in former years their nominal Prime Minister. But all of them, from the highest to the lowest, felt a natural repugnance to break with their real chief. So long as they could, they had laboured to urge that the difference between Burke and Fox was speculative only—that Burke might well leave the allusions of Fox and Sheridan without reply—and that there was nothing to prevent their continued concurrence in the field of practical action. When at last the breach did come,

all, or nearly all, the Whig Members of Parliament, always excepting Windham, espoused the side of Fox. And, as commonly happens in parties, though there might be some hesitation in deciding, yet, when the decision was taken, they rushed at once into an angry extreme. I have already related their insulting, and, as it were, systematic interruptions of Burke on the 6th of May. Within the week a significant hint was conveyed him in the columns of a Whig newspaper, that he was expected to retire from the House of Commons.[2] Thus far then Burke remained almost alone. Even at the close of this summer no immediate effect appears to have been produced by his masterly tract "An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs." But the progress of affairs in France was surely, though slowly, working in his favour. Month after month during the next two years the news that came from across the Channel tended more and more to fulfil his predictions, and to falsify the hopes of Fox. And thus, as will be shown hereafter, a great majority of his former friends ended by coming round to his declared opinions.

But meanwhile the isolation of Burke in public life manifested in the clearest manner how high and honourable were the motives by which he was swayed. For it is to be observed, so far as the contending parties in England were concerned, that in losing old friends, he had by no means acquired new. He had indeed, from time to time, some communications with

[2] "The consequence (of this dispute) is that Mr. Burke retires from Parliament."—Morning Chronicle, May 12, 1791. See also Prior's Life of Burke, vol. ii. p. 169.

the Ministry on business connected with the French Emigrants. But these communications were on both sides cold and ungenial. Mr. Burke sought no junction upon other points with the party that he had so long opposed. On the other hand, Mr. Pitt at this period appears to have regarded the vehemence of Mr. Burke against the rulers of France as unsafe and extreme. When appealed to in the debates of the House of Commons, the Prime Minister, while commending the patriotic spirit of Burke, had advised him rather to extol the English Constitution than to attack the French.[3] Therefore, in the course which he had chosen, Burke went on alone. He might justly feel at this juncture that he had sacrificed for conscience sake not merely any ambitious views of his own, but what was far dearer to him, the ambitious views of his son and only child. He might justly write as follows to one of the French gentlemen in England, an agent from the Princes at Coblentz: "In the disinterested part we actively take in your affairs, we want no apology to any human creature. We have made many enemies here, and no friends, by the part we have taken. We have, for your sakes, mixed with those with whom we have had no natural intercourse. We have quitted our business; we have broken in upon our engagements. For one mortification you have endured, we have endured twenty. My son has crossed land and sea with much trouble, and at an expense

[3] See the remarks of Burke on this advice in his "Appeal to the Old Whigs." (Works, vol. vi. p. 91, ed. 1815.)

above his means. But the cause of humanity requires it; he does not murmur; and is ready to do as much and more for men whose faces he has not seen."[4]

The limits to the rights of Juries, and the statements of Judges in reference to them, had of late years attracted some attention. In 1784 there was the trial of Dr. William Shipley, Dean of St. Asaph, on the charge of publishing a libel which was written by Sir William Jones, and entitled "A Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Farmer;" and the verdict in this case had been "Guilty of publishing, but whether a libel or not the Jury do not find." In 1789 there was, as we have seen, the trial of John Stockdale, when the Jury returned a verdict of Not Guilty. In 1790 there was the prosecution of John Luxford, printer of the Morning Herald, for a paragraph tending to embroil us with our nearest neighbours, since it boldly asserted that in the armament resulting from the affair at Nootka Sound, the Ministers had in view not an open contest with Spain, but rather a treacherous attack on France. Here the defendant pleaded Guilty, and was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment.

In such cases, the Judge, when he had to charge the Jury, was wont to rely mainly on a solemn declaration from the Court of King's Bench as presided over by the Earl of Mansfield, and as called forth by the ambiguous verdict in Dean Shipley's trial. In this argument Lord Mansfield had clearly laid down the position that the Juries were to decide the fact and not the

[4] Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 354, ed. 1844.

law—whether the defendant had or had not published the pamphlet, and not whether the pamphlet was or was not a libel. When in 1788 Mansfield had retired from the Bench full of years and honours, his decisions continued to be cited with deserved respect. Nor indeed was it alleged by men of weight that he had failed to lay down the law correctly according to the latest precedents. In May 1791 even Erskine, keen as he was for the rights of Juries, acknowledged in the House of Commons that if he were called to fill a judicial office, he should find it difficult on this subject to resist the current of decisions.

The Juries on their part were by no means always inclined to acquiesce in this limitation of their right, and it seemed most desirable that all doubts should be removed, and that they should obtain beyond dispute the full powers that they claimed. Twenty years before Burke had framed a Bill for that purpose. The subject was now resumed by Fox, who moved for leave to introduce his measure on the 20th of May, and who received on that occasion the cordial support of Pitt. But Fox had stirred too late in the Session for immediate success. Though the Bill was carried through the Commons with all possible despatch, the Second Reading could not be moved by Earl Stanhope in the Lords until the 8th of June, the Prorogation being designed for the 10th; and the Chancellor might therefore safely and on sufficient grounds gratify his dislike of the measure by moving and obtaining its rejection for this year.

There was another subject this Session on which Pitt

and Fox concurred. Mr. John Mitford, a lawyer of eminence, and afterwards the first Lord Redesdale, produced a Bill in favour of the Roman Catholics. His object, as he explained it, was by no means to enable them to sit in Parliament or to fill any office from which they were before excluded, but to provide that such among them as should take an oath prescribed by the Bill should be exempted from some of the severe penalties which at various times since the Reformation had been passed against them. These penalties—a most just reproach to the age and race by which they were enacted—were so many that the mere enumeration of them in Burn's work on Ecclesiastical Law took up seventy pages. Pitt declared himself friendly to the measure, and Fox only complained that it did not go far enough. The relief, he said, ought to extend to every Roman Catholic, and not to the oath-takers alone. In the same spirit Pitt expressed an earnest wish that the obnoxious Statutes might be not only suspended, but repealed. Meanwhile, however, the Bill of Mr. Mitford was carried through the Commons unopposed, and in the Lords was supported by the Primate and the Bench of Bishops, the Chancellor on that day being absent from illness. And thus, with some amendments, the measure passed into law.

It may well be supposed that the Roman Catholics—and above all with such weighty opinions on their side—did not deem this concession final and conclusive, but desired to press their further claims. A Committee had been formed, and was sitting at Dublin, with a view to legislative action on their behalf in both kingdoms,

and as Secretary they had chosen Richard Burke, the son of the great philosopher and statesman.

Up to this time I have shown the Prime Minister triumphant in nearly all his measures, and upheld in every contest by the public approbation and applause. We are now to contemplate almost the first check to that lofty will, almost the first cloud upon that brilliant sky, in the ill reception of his scheme for the Russian armament. But here a retrospect will be required.

The views entertained with respect to the rising empire of Russia had greatly varied in England within sixty years, even among those statesmen who agreed on other questions. Thus, in 1719, the policy of Stanhope, at that time Prime Minister, had been defined "to drive the Muscovites as far off as possible." On the other hand, we find in 1773 Chatham write to Shelburne: "Your Lordship knows I am quite a Russ." Of these two opinions, as time proceeded, Pitt certainly inclined to the former. And he watched with anxiety the progress of the war, commencing in August, 1787, which the Court of Petersburg had haughtily provoked, and the Porte imprudently declared.

Even at the outset of these hostilities the Empress Catherine felt secure of a powerful ally. She had recently met, on a journey to the Crimea, her brother Emperor Joseph the Second; they had travelled for the most part in the same carriage, exchanged many compliments, and discussed many schemes of conquest.[5] And among these stood foremost the destruction, or at

[5] Lettres et Pensées du Prince de Ligne (who was present with them), vol. i. p. 92, ed. 1809.

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least the dismemberment, of the Ottoman empire. Joseph the Second, with many good and some great qualities, was misled by an inconsiderate desire of rivalling Frederick the Great. Thirsting for military fame, and careless of political consequences, he issued a Declaration of War against Turkey in February, 1788. His Manifesto on that occasion required some skill to draw, since in truth he had not the smallest grievance against the Sultan to allege, and could only plead his wish to succour his good friend the Czarina.

But the result to the Emperor, when he appeared at the head of his soldiers, by no means corresponded with his hopes. He had collected an army of 200,000 men, the largest perhaps that the House of Austria had yet brought into the field, but it was unskilfully distributed along the whole line of the Turkish frontier. One main body, under the Prince of Coburg, was designed to co-operate with the Russians in Moldavia; another, under Joseph himself, moved along the Save. At the head of this last force, from which such great things had been expected, Joseph might indeed reduce the petty border fortress of Sabacz, but he could not prevent the Grand Vizier from invading and laying waste the Bannat of Temeswar. He found it necessary to order a retreat, which was made in haste and ill-conducted, and at the close of the year he came back to Vienna sick in body and dejected in mind.

Catherine the Second had entrusted the principal direction of the war to her favourite, Prince Potemkin. Under him Count Romanzow commanded the army on the Pruth. Under him the Prince de Nassau-Siegen,

with whom the adventurer Paul Jones had taken service, commanded the flotilla in the Euxine. The Turks, on their part, relied on their formidable fleet of eighteen ships of the line, and on their renowned Capitan Pacha Hassan, the hero of Lemnos. Hassan did indeed display all his former daring, not quenched by the snows of fourscore years, but there was neither skill nor discipline in most of his officers or men. In the autumn of 1788 his armament was first repulsed by Paul Jones at Gluboka, then all but annihilated at Kinburn by Jones and Siegen united. Emboldened by this success Prince Potemkin proceeded to invest the important fortress of Ockzakow.

Turning from the Euxine to the Baltic, there appeared to the Turkish side a wholly unexpected ally. Gustavus of Sweden was, through his mother Ulrica, nephew to the great King of Prussia, and like the Emperor Joseph he felt a perilous ambition to rival that consummate master of the art of war. He had as little plea for assailing Russia as Joseph for assailing Turkey; nevertheless he published a Manifesto in the summer of 1788, and at once commenced hostilities. On proceeding to put himself at the head of his forces in Finland, the parallel with Joseph might be still further continued, for he encountered nothing but discomfiture. Admiral Greig, a Scotchman in the Russians' service, and commanding their Baltic fleet, proved an overmatch to the Swedish. The principal officers and nobles of Gustavus were disaffected to him from the violent subversion of their privileges which he had made in former years, and the Danes, at the instigation

of Catherine, suddenly assailed his dominions on their side. It became necessary for him to return from Finland in all haste, and oppose himself to these new adversaries. The King of Sweden was then beyond all doubt in a most critical position, and he owed his deliverance only to the active measures of Pitt.

The object of Pitt, whether in the north or south, was the same—to uphold the balance of power. For this object he had just concluded and he relied upon treaties of alliance with Holland and Prussia. He now desired that the three Allies should by a joint Remonstrance arrest the progress of the Danes and Russians and save Sweden. It was no easy matter on this occasion to overcome the conscientious scruple of George the Third, who apprehended any risk of war. It was no easy matter on this occasion or on any other to animate the indolent temper of Frederick William. But the requisite sanction at least for the first steps being granted, Mr. Hugh Elliot, our Minister at Copenhagen, received the desired instructions. Without losing a moment he crossed over into Sweden and hastened to the camp of the Danish army before Gothenburg. There he met the young Prince Royal, nephew of George the Third, and virtual Regent of Denmark through his father's incapacity. To him Mr. Elliot at once presented a Remonstrance in the name of the three Allies, threatening him with their resentment if the war with Sweden were further pursued. Under this pressure a preliminary truce was signed on the 9th of October, first for only a week, and at the close of that period for a month.

The aim of Pitt was now to carry out this policy to its full extent—to bring the Danes from a preliminary to a final pacification. Here again there were some conscientious difficulties on the part of George the Third, over whom the shadow of his great malady was just beginning to be cast. My readers may themselves consult the King's touching letter of October 25, Mr. Pitt's answer offering some modification, and the King's rejoinder of November 3, 1788. The result was in complete accordance with the wishes and the expectations of the British Minister. England, without incurring any warfare of her own, arrested the warfare of another Power. The Danes marched back their troops to Norway, and subsequently were persuaded to resume their position as neutrals in the war.

On the side of Turkey the armies had for the most part withdrawn to winter quarters. But the investment of Ockzakow was still continued by Prince Potemkin. The Turks, well aware of the importance of this post, had thrown into it a garrison of twenty thousand chosen troops. A scarcely less effectual protection seemed to be afforded it by the extreme severity of the winter which ensued. Nevertheless Prince Potemkin, eager to signalise himself at whatever cost of lives, paid no regard to the hundreds that daily perished from exposure to the cold, but still kept his forces in the field and began to bombard the city with red-hot balls. One of these fell on the great powder-magazine, which blew up with a terrible explosion, killing five thousand people and demolishing a portion of the wall. A general assault being given in consequence on the 17th of De-

cember, 1788, the place was taken by storm after a brave resistance and vast slaughter on both sides. The fall of this important border-fortress was felt as a great shock not only through the Turkish empire, but throughout all Europe. It was the first stronghold acquired by the Russians on the Euxine, and it filled a space in the popular apprehensions of those times not less than in our own day did Sebastopol.

In April of the next year, 1789, occurred the sudden demise of the Sultan Abdul Hamet, succeeded by his nephew Selim. The new Sovereign changed the Ministers and Generals, but maintained the warlike policy, of his predecessor. When, however, shortly afterwards the campaign commenced, it was marked by a long train of disasters to the Ottoman empire. Joseph the Second, being detained by illness at Vienna, had summoned from retirement the veteran commander Laudohn, whose high military fame had up to that time excited his jealousy rather than his confidence. Advancing along the Save, Laudohn reduced Gradisca, and in spite of all opposition besieged and took the important city of Belgrade. In Moldavia Suwarrow had succeeded Romanzow as leader of the Russians, and displayed at once the uncultivated genius, the barbarian vigour for which his name has become renowned. Concerting measures with the Prince of Coburg, they marched beyond the Sereth, and utterly defeated the Turks in two bloody battles at Fockshan and at Rimnik. The Turks were driven in confusion across the Danube, while not only the city of Bucharest but the whole province of Wallachia became the spoil of the victors.

Along the wide extent of northern frontier there was yet space for another signal reverse to the Turkish arms. One of the changes made by the new Sultan had been to transfer the High Admiral, Hassan Pacha, from his own element to the land-service, giving him the command of some forces, with which he was directed to march into Bessarabia, there to aim at the recovery of Ockzakow and the protection of Bender. Hassan had passed the Danube and reached the village of Tobak, when he was encountered by a Russian army led by Prince Potemkin, and after a hard-fought action was utterly defeated.

Thus on all points had the Turks been put to the rout with heavy loss. Another such campaign might have driven them beyond the Bosphorus. But as in a former year from Sweden, so in the next there came to them an important diversion from the Netherlands and Hungary. In both the Emperor Joseph had attempted to establish reforms, good for the most part in themselves, but ill-timed, precipitate, and urged with arbitrary violence. In both there was a reaction not less violent, extending in Hungary to the very verge of civil war, and in the Netherlands to successful insurrection. Joseph, already on his death-bed, found it necessary to revoke all the most cherished measures of his not long but laborious life; and on the 20th of February, 1790, he expired.

Joseph was succeeded in the Hereditary States, as afterwards in the Imperial Crown, by his brother Leopold, the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Leopold at once applied himself, and not without success, to heal the

wounds which Joseph had inflicted. Both Hungary and Belgium were by degrees restored to quiet, though still for a long time heaving with their recent agitation. Meanwhile on the Danube the Austrian troops had done little more than reduce Orsova and besiege Widdin. Leopold did not seek new victories, but expected to derive some fruits from those already gained. He thought it only reasonable that the Turks should be prepared to make considerable cessions in any treaty of peace.

It was at this point that the three Allies—the Cabinets of London, the Hague, and Berlin—were able to interpose with signal effect. Already, a few days only before the demise of Joseph, Prussia had concluded a treaty of alliance with the Porte, and commenced active preparations for war. It was now made clear to Leopold that unless he would renounce the concert of measures with Russia, and the schemes for the partition of Turkey, he must be prepared to encounter on the other side the whole force of the Prussian monarchy. England and Holland, though closely linked with Prussia in these negotiations, were admitted to take part as mediators in the Congress which was held at Reichenbach, in Silesia, between the rival States. Through their joint exertions Leopold was induced, seeking moreover to secure the votes of Brandenburg and Hanover at the approaching Imperial election, to conclude in July, 1790, the Convention called of Reichenbach, renouncing his alliance with Russia, providing for a speedy peace between himself and the Porte, and consenting to give back all the conquests made on his part during the war.

The relief which this Convention afforded at a most seasonable time to the tottering Turkish empire was lessened in some degree by another treaty of peace concluded at nearly the same time between Russia and Sweden. The campaign on the side of Finland had been marked by numerous encounters both by land and sea, and with varying fortune, but even their successes brought heavy loss in men and in ships to the Swedes. Under these circumstances Gustavus rushed into peace with as much precipitation as he had into war. Without the smallest regard to his allies, or to his pledges, he signed a treaty at his camp in August, 1790, fixing his frontiers with Russia exactly as they stood before the war, and leaving the Empress Catherine at liberty to turn her entire and undivided forces against the Turks.

Of this liberty the Empress was resolved to make full use. Her armies had remained almost stationary on the Danube through the spring and summer, while Austria was in suspense and negotiations were in progress. But it was hoped that, as at Ockzakow, the winter season would not preclude an important blow. The object now in view was the reduction of Ismail, a strong town on the left arm of the Danube, near its mouth, and into which the Turks had thrown almost an army for a garrison. Prince Potemkin sent his instructions to General Suwarrow in these few words: "You will take Ismail at whatever cost." Having made his dispositions accordingly, Suwarrow on the morning of the 22nd of December, 1790, led up his troops to the assault. The resistance was obstinate, but unavailing, the

slaughter terrible, and continued long after the resistance had ceased. It is computed that on the day of the storm, and on the two following, the number of the Turks that perished, men, women, and children together, amounted to no less than four and thirty thousand.

CHAPTER XV.

1791.

Policy of England — "The Russian Armament" — Concession of Pitt to the popular feeling — Death of Prince Potemkin — Lord Grenville appointed Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs — Lord Chatham and Mr. Pitt compared by Lady Chatham — Marriage of the Duke of York — Correspondence with the Bishop of Lichfield — Pitt's patronage of humble merit in the Church — Commutation of Tithes — French Revolution — Declaration of Pilnitz — Riots at Birmingham — Destruction of Dr. Priestley's house.

In my last chapter I gave a slight, but perhaps for my purpose sufficient sketch of the events in Eastern and Northern Europe since 1787. That sketch has now brought me to the commencement of 1791, and will serve to explain the policy in that year of Mr. Pitt. He could look back with gratification to the success of the three Allies. He was proud to think that they had been able first to arrest the progress of Denmark in the North; next to curb the ambition of Austria, and compel her to renounce the conquests she had already made. It was his opinion that precisely the same course should be pursued towards Russia. But the negotiations with that view, conducted through the autumn and winter, proved altogether unsatisfactory. The Empress resented as an insult any interference of the Neutral Powers. She would hear nothing of moderation and forbearance. She was fully determined, even before the taking of Ismail, and still more fully after it, that in any treaty of peace with the Porte, she would

retain a considerable portion of her conquests, and, above all, the fortress of Ockzakow as her first opening to the Euxine.

All remonstrances against this determination being haughtily rejected by the Court of Petersburg, Pitt thought that the time had come for more decisive measures. Already with that view had he kept in commission several ships beyond the regular peace establishment. He now sent orders to increase the number, and make them with all despatch ready for sea; and this, in the language of the time, was called "the Russian armament." As at Reichenbach it was the muster along the frontier of a Prussian army ready for action that mainly weighed with Austria in conceding, so now, in all probability, might with Russia the aspect of a British fleet. But if not—if the Empress Catherine were bent on trying her strength against the countrymen of Hawke and Boscawen—then, as Pitt believed, the present balance of power, and the future security of Europe, were considerations of fully sufficient importance to justify a war.

On the 27th of March Pitt held a Cabinet upon this subject. He did not carry through his views without some difficulty, as will appear from a letter addressed to him in the course of the same night by the Duke of Richmond.

"Whitehall, Sunday night,
March 27, 1791.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Although it is next to impossible for two persons in the course of a variety of events always to see the same things in the same point of view, yet I cannot but feel

hurt when I happen to differ from you in any essential point. At the same time I am sure that in one of such importance as that we discussed this morning in Cabinet, you would not wish me to keep back my real sentiments; and the more I think of the subject the more I am confirmed in my opinion that unless we have Holland, in some ostensible shape at least, with us, and the Swedish ports open to our fleet, with an accession of Poland to our alliance, we risk too much in pledging this country to Prussia to make war against Russia in order to compel her to make peace with the Porte upon the *status quo*. I have duly weighed all the arguments you made use of, which undoubtedly have great force, but I cannot say they have convinced me.

"I have not the presumption to wish that my ideas should preponderate against yours and the majority of the Cabinet, and I by no means wish to enter any formal dissent to the measure, but merely to be understood by you that my opinion does not go with it. When once it is adopted, I shall contribute the little I can to its success.

"I am ever most truly and sincerely yours,

"RICHMOND."

Next day, however, Monday the 28th of March, Pitt presented to the House of Commons a Message in the name of the King, stating that the endeavours which His Majesty had used, in concert with his Allies, to effect a reconciliation between Russia and the Porte having hitherto been unsuccessful, he judged it requisite to make some further augmentation of his naval force, and he trusted that his faithful Commons would be ready to make good the expenses that might be incurred. No sooner was the Message delivered than

Fox started up to declare his opposition to its purport. On the following day, and on several subsequent occasions, he argued against it with his usual force, ably seconded by several of his friends: in the Commons by Grey, Sheridan, and Whitbread; in the Peers by Lords Loughborough and Stormont, and Lord North, now Earl of Guilford. Was it really of such vast importance to English interests whether Russia did or did not retain the territory between the Boug and Dniester, or even the strong-hold of Ockzakow? Was it really worth while to incur all the costs and all the calamities of war for a desolate tract of marshes, and for a fortress half in ruins?

The great eloquence which Fox displayed upon this subject was not greater than of late years he had displayed upon many other subjects. But he had the pleasure to find that it made far more impression on his hearers. The evils of Russian ambition were contingent and remote; those of increased expenditure plain, palpable, immediate. But, moreover, Fox having no official considerations to restrain him, could discuss the question boldly in all its bearings. Pitt, on the other hand, deemed it inconsistent with his duty to reveal the exact state of the negotiation, or even to mention Ockzakow, and thus he could only, as it were, meet a rapier with a foil.

The Russian armament, therefore, found no favour with the public. On the day after the King's Message, and when the Opposition had moved an Amendment to the Address, the Ministers prevailed by a majority of 93; but on the next occasion, and in a much fuller House,

that majority declined to 80. Out of doors the measure grew daily more unpopular. Even in the ranks of the majority there were many doubtful or reluctant votes. Pitt felt that he must sound a retreat.

Once convinced of the necessity of yielding, Pitt did not procrastinate or linger. It was, he saw, of pressing importance that the country should not become more deeply committed on this question. He despatched to Russia with all possible speed a Messenger, who fortunately arrived in sufficient time to withhold our Minister from presenting to the Court of Petersburg a new and threatening Note which was already prepared. And in relinquishing the warlike measures which he had commenced for the recovery of Ockzakow, Pitt was anxious, by means of a secret letter, addressed to Mr. Ewart, to explain to the Court of Berlin the urgent reasons for that change. That letter, as derived from the draft in Pitt's own writing, has been already printed in the Life by Bishop Tomline, but I shall here print it again. It is necessary to premise that Mr. Ewart had lately been in England, and was only just returned to his post.

"My dear Sir, "Holwood, May 24, 1791.

"You are so fully apprised, from your own observation, and from our repeated conversations, of all which has passed here in relation to affairs abroad, and of every sentiment of mine on the subject, that I can have nothing fresh to add in this letter.

"I wish, however, to repeat my earnest and anxious desire that you should find means of informing the King of Prussia, as openly and explicitly as possible, of the real state of the business, and of the true motives of our conduct. He knows, I am persuaded, too well the

effect which opinion and public impression must always have in this country, either to complain of our change of measures or to wonder at it, if the true cause be fully explained to him. You perfectly know that no man could be more eagerly bent than I was on a steady adherence to the line which we had at first proposed, of going all lengths to enforce the terms of the strict *status quo*; and I am still as much persuaded as ever that if we could have carried the support of the country with us, the risk and expense of the struggle, even if Russia had not submitted without a struggle, would not have been more than the object was worth.

"But notwithstanding this was my own fixed opinion, I saw with certainty, in a very few days after the subject was first discussed in Parliament, that the prospect of obtaining a support sufficient to carry this line through with vigour and effect was absolutely desperate. We did indeed carry our question in the House of Commons, by not an inconsiderable majority; and we shall, I am persuaded, continue successful in resisting all the attempts of Opposition as long as the negotiation is depending. But from what I know of the sentiments of the greatest part of that majority, and of many of the warmest friends of Government, I am sure that if, in persisting in the line of the *status quo*, we were to come to the point of actually calling for supplies to support the war, and were to state, as would then be indispensable, the precise ground on which it arose, that we should either not carry such a question, or carry it only by so weak a division as would nearly amount to a defeat. This opinion I certainly formed neither hastily nor willingly; nor could I easily make a sacrifice more painful to myself than I have done in yielding to it. But feeling the circumstances to be such as I have stated them, the only question that remained was, whether we should persist, at all hazards, in pushing

our first determination, though without a chance of rendering it effectual to its object, or whether we should endeavour to do what appears to be the next best, when what we wished to do became impracticable.

"To speak plainly: the obvious effect of our persisting would have been to risk the existence of the present Government, and with it the whole of our system both at home and abroad. The personal part of this consideration it would have been our duty to overlook, and I trust we should all have been ready to do so, if by any risk of our own we should have contributed to the attainment of a great and important object for this country and its allies; but the consequence must evidently have been the reverse. The overthrow of our system here, at the same time that it hazarded driving the Government at home into a state of absolute confusion, must have shaken the whole of our system abroad. It is not difficult to foresee what must have been the consequence to Prussia of a change effected by an opposition to the very measures taken in concert with that Court, and resting on the avowed ground of our present system of alliance.

"On these considerations it is that we have felt the necessity of changing our plan, and endeavouring to find the best expedient we can for terminating the business without extremities. Fortunately, the having succeeded in stopping the proposed representation to Russia has prevented our being as pointedly committed as there was reason to apprehend we might have been. The modifications which have been suggested, the recommendation of them from Spain, the prospect of bringing that Court to join in a subsequent guarantee of the Turkish possessions, and the chance of, perhaps, bringing the Emperor to accede to our system, are all circumstances which give an opening for extricating us from our present difficulty. You are so fully master of

the whole of those details, that I shall not enlarge upon them. My great object is, that you should be able to satisfy the King of Prussia of the strong necessity under which we have acted, and that we really had no other choice, with a view either to his interests or to those which we are most bound to consult at home.

"I am, &c.,

"W. PITT."

The concession here made by Pitt in good time (for on that in a concession everything depends) to the popular feeling averted his Parliamentary danger. But the whole transaction tended to dim his Parliamentary renown. Here was manifestly a miscalculation and a failure,—the first on any foreign question that he had ever known. Men began to whisper that his fall might be near at hand—that the public confidence was lost—that the King's favour was declining—that His Majesty had been heard to say at his Levee that, should any change become requisite, he had no personal objections to Mr. Fox. It may likewise be observed that rumours of this kind were not without their effect on the dissension which broke forth directly afterwards between Fox and Burke. Even such politicians of the Opposition side as at heart agreed with Burke on the terrors of the French Revolution, deemed it impolitic to side with the philosopher just retiring from the stage, and to break with the statesman perhaps on the very point of being called to the head of affairs.

On another point also was Burke mixed up in this transaction. He had taken part with Fox in speaking and voting against the Russian armament; but subsequently to their quarrel he stated a charge against

his former friend in a private letter to the Duke of Portland, which, some years later, was surreptitiously and without his leave made public. The charge was, that Mr. Fox, without in any manner consulting his party, had sent Mr. Adair (at a later period Sir Robert) on a secret mission to Petersburg with the view to counteract the efforts of the King's Envoy, Mr. Fawkener. Such had been the rumour at the time. Mr. Pitt himself, though he did not accuse Mr. Fox of any share in this transaction, twice in the House of Commons intimated an idea that the presence of Mr. Adair at the Russian Court had been injurious. "Better terms," he said, "might have been obtained at Petersburg, had it not been for certain circumstances of notoriety hostile to the political interests of England." In the heat of party conflict it must be owned that there appeared some grounds of probability sufficient to justify the charge.

Many years afterwards, however, that is in 1821, the charge was revived by Bishop Tomline in a more deliberate form. The Bishop said that its accuracy was attested by authentic documents among Mr. Pitt's papers. But, when publicly appealed to by Sir Robert Adair, he did not produce any. I certainly have not found any such among the papers which were then in the Bishop's hands and which are now in mine, and I believe that the Bishop's memory must have entirely deceived him on this point. The final vindication of Sir Robert—dated in February, 1842, and published in the Fox Memorials—appears to me complete. It clearly shows that the journey to Petersburg was Mr. Adair's own act, without any suggestion of Mr. Fox

and without any treacherous design of either. Mr. Fox went no farther than to say, as he most reasonably might, when Mr. Adair took leave of him, "Well, if you are determined to go, send us all the news."

The Czarina, however, received Mr. Adair with high honours as the friend of Fox, and took pains to contrast her demeanour to him with that to Mr. Fawkener. She professed the highest regard for the great orator in consequence of his recent course; and having obtained his bust from England, placed it in a gallery of her palace between those of Demosthenes and Cicero.

Abroad, it became necessary for the Prussian Ministers to follow the course of England. They could not persevere with effect in resisting the pretensions of Russia on the side of Turkey; and the Porte itself had no alternative but to yield. It was agreed that the Czarina should retain the fortress of Ockzakow, and the territory between the Boug and the Dniester; the latter stream to be henceforth the limit between the two empires. The Preliminaries of Peace were signed on the 11th of August, and a Congress was appointed to be held at Yassy for the completion of the treaty.

In October, and before this peace was finally adjusted, died Prince Potemkin, one of the most zealous promoters of the war. His ascendency with the Empress had recently declined under the influence of a younger rival. He was travelling to Nicolayeff for change of air, in company with his niece the Countess Braniska, when he felt himself so ill that he desired to be lifted from the carriage and placed on the grass beneath a tree, and there—like the humblest wayfarer on the road-side—did this favourite of fortune expire.

Chagrin and anxiety had combined to ruin his health with excesses of the table. "His usual breakfast at this time was a smoked goose, with a large quantity of wine and spirits, and he dined in the same manner." So, at least, says the biographer of Paul Jones.[1] Paul Jones himself at this time was no longer in the Russian service. So early as April, 1789, he had found it necessary to leave Petersburg in disgrace under a heavy personal charge; and he died at Paris in great obscurity in July, 1792.

There had been rumours in England of Ministerial changes consequent upon the Russian armament. But the only real resignation that ensued was that of the Duke of Leeds. His Grace, in a highly honourable spirit, resolved, rather than consent to modify the policy recommended in his own office, to throw up the Seals. The place thus left vacant was supplied by transferring Lord Grenville from the Home to the Foreign Department; while Dundas, although still retaining the Presidency of the India Board, was appointed Home Secretary. His appointment, however, was regarded as only temporary. It was the wish of Pitt, to which he obtained the King's assent, that Lord Cornwallis should return from India and become Home Secretary. The offer went out to Calcutta, but Lord Cornwallis explained in the first place that it was impossible for him to quit his post while the war with Tippoo continued. Subsequently it further appeared that Lord Cornwallis, conscious of

[1] Memoirs of Paul Jones, vol. ii. p. 137, ed. 1830.

his deficiencies as a debater, was unwilling to accept any Parliamentary office that should require speeches on his part. And thus the appointment of Dundas, though provisional at first, was finally looked upon as permanent.

Lord Grenville, as raised to the Upper House and as placed at the Foreign Office, had now an adequate and well-adapted field for his eminent abilities. The Peers found in him a leader of whom they might be proud. They acknowledged his constant application to all the details of public business. They listened with unvarying respect to his grave and well-poised, his sententious and sonorous eloquence. At the Foreign Office he showed at all times a lofty English spirit and a watchful jealousy of the national honour; and the despatches which he carefully prepared were excellent State papers. As a politician, however, he had one deficiency, which, in a private letter of a later period, he candidly avowed: "I am not competent to the management of men. I never was so naturally, and toil and anxiety more and more unfit me for it." [2]

At this time and for many years subsequently Lord Grenville was on most cordial and intimate terms with Pitt. They treated each other not only as Cabinet colleagues, but as the near kinsmen that they were. That bond of kinsmanship was drawn still closer when in July, 1792, Lord Grenville married the Hon. Anne Pitt, only daughter of Lord Camelford. At the moment

[2] Letter to Lord Buckingham, dated March 7, 1807.

I am writing (sixty-eight years later) that lady still in most honoured old age survives.

In the course of this spring there was also some change in the lesser offices. Of the two Secretaries of the Treasury since 1784, Mr. Steele and Mr. Rose, the former became Joint Paymaster, with the rank of Privy Councillor, and with the Hon. Dudley Ryder, the eldest son of Lord Harrowby, for a colleague. He was succeeded in his first post by Mr. Charles Long, an attached friend of Mr. Pitt, and an excellent man of business, who was raised to the peerage in 1826 as Lord Farnborough, and who in his later years was distinguished by his knowledge of Art. Mr. Rose on the other hand remained Secretary of the Treasury through the whole first administration of Mr. Pitt.

At the close of June, and while Pitt was still detained in London, we find Wilberforce pay a visit at Burton Pynsent, and describe that visit in his Diary. "June 30. Got to Pynsent at night. Old Lady Chatham a noble antiquity, very like Lady Harriot, and the Pitt voice.—July 1. At Burton all day. Walked and talked with Eliot. Lady Chatham asked about Fox's speaking—is much interested in politics. Seventy-five years old, and a very active mind."

Lady Chatham, though at that time in retirement and old age, was indeed, as Lord Macaulay says, "a woman of considerable abilities." She had been the main stay of her husband in sickness and sorrow. She had assisted in unfolding the early promise of her son. I once asked Sir Robert Peel whether he could remember any other instance in modern history

where a woman had almost equal reason to be proud in two relations of life—of her son and of her husband. When next I saw Sir Robert, he told me that he had thought over the question with care, and could produce no other instance quite in point since the days of Philip of Macedon. The nearest approach to it, he said, would be that of Mr. Pitt's own rival; since Mr. Fox would well sustain one half of the parallel, but the first Lord Holland, although a man of great abilities, was wholly unequal to the first Lord Chatham.

Perhaps I may presume to add an anecdote which I derived at nearly the same time from Lady Chatham's last surviving grand-daughter, my aunt, Lady Griselda Tekell.

Here is the inquiry which I addressed to her:—

"Grosvenor Place, Feb. 1, 1850.

. . . . . .

"I have a favour to ask of you. My father once mentioned to me a little anecdote of much interest which he had heard from you at a former time, to the effect of Lady Chatham being asked whether she thought her husband or her son the greater statesman, and of her having answered — certainly with excellent taste and judgment as a wife, however the comparison might be held by others—that there could be no doubt at all as to Lord Chatham being far the superior. Might I request of you to put down on paper exactly what you remember of this story, and to let me have it? I think that a *trait* so curious and so creditable to the person concerned ought to be preserved in the most authentic shape."

Lady Griselda answered me as follows:—

"Frimley Park, Feb. 8, 1850.

. . . . . .

"With respect to the question you put to me concerning what my grandmother, Lady Chatham, said of the ability of her husband, I did not consider it as relating to his character as a statesman, but to his general talents. When I was about fifteen I was on a visit to Burton Pynsent, and one day asked her in rather a childish manner, 'Which do you think the cleverest, Grandpapa or Mr. Pitt?' To which her answer was, 'Your Grandpapa, without doubt,' or some equivalent expression. Her own understanding was so superior, her judgment on this point carries great weight."

In July, 1791, we find Pitt—as usual at the close of the Session—turn his thoughts to Somersetshire. And, as it chanced, the King's residence at Weymouth during many weeks of this autumn enabled the Minister to pay not one visit only, but two, at Burton.

Here are his letters at that time.

"Wimbledon, July 2, 1791.

"My dear Mother,

"I heartily wish I could gratify Mr. Reid in an object so interesting to him; but I have not yet been able to ascertain clearly in whose recommendation the living in question is. I much fear it will prove to be in the Chancellor's. If it should be in mine, I trust there can be nothing to prevent my giving it as he wishes. I was not a little disappointed at being prevented from coming to you at the time I expected, and the disappointment is not the less from circumstances hitherto having followed one another so as to leave me very uncertain when I may be

at liberty. It is not impossible that I may find ten days of a fortnight before the end of this month, but as yet I hardly dare reckon upon it. We are all anxious *spectators* of the strange scene in France, and still in entire suspense as to the issue of it, with respect to the personal situation of the King and Queen, and the form of their future government. No material news has arrived from thence within these few days, and it is very difficult, in such a state, to have any accounts on which we can rely for accuracy as to particulars.

"The result of our own negotiations on the Continent is also still uncertain. This situation makes the idleness of our holidays not quite complete, but it allows time for excursions during half the week either to this place or Holwood, and the weather for some days has made every hour in the country delightful. Have the goodness to tell Eliot that I received his letter, and will write to him in a day or two. Affectionate compliments to Mrs. Stapleton, and love to little girl.

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

"Downing Street, July 21, 1791.

"I am still in the same state of suspense with regard to the events which are to decide when I may reckon on a sufficient interval of holidays to reach Burton. It cannot, however, be much longer before I shall be able to judge. In the mean time I am enough at liberty to meditate an excursion for a couple of days at the end of this week into Hampshire, from whence I hope by stealth to get a view of the fleet, which is an object well worth seeing, and which I hope after this summer there will not be an opportunity of seeing again for some time."

"Downing Street, Sept. 24, 1791.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"You will wonder to receive a letter from me dated from hence; and I write merely that the newspapers may not give you the first information of my arrival, with whatever may be their ingenious speculations on the occasion of it. The real cause is a difficulty of form respecting the Duke of York's marriage, which has been precipitately fixed at Berlin for next week, without waiting for the regular signification of the Council as required by the famous Marriage Act. We found it the shortest way to come to town, in order to expedite the necessary forms as much as possible; but it is still doubtful whether anything we can do will be in time to make the marriage valid, and whether the ceremony must not be performed again. I shall stay no longer than is necessary for this business, and shall probably be at Weymouth again on Tuesday or Wednesday, a very few days after which will bring me to Burton.

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

"Downing Street, Oct. 4, 1791.

"I am very sorry the newspapers have done so much honour to my gout. I had in fact just enough for a few days to furnish materials for a paragraph, but it was very little inconvenience while it lasted, and has left none behind it."

The marriage of the Duke of York, to which Pitt in these letters refers, was solemnized at Berlin on the 29th of September. His bride was the Princess

Frederica, eldest daughter of the King of Prussia. "She is far from handsome," writes Lord Malmesbury, "but lively, sensible, and very tractable; and if only one tenth part of the attachment they now show for each other remains, it will be very sufficient to make a most happy marriage."[3] But from the events of subsequent years it may be feared that even that tenth part did not remain.

Passing to another subject, I may observe that the papers of Mr. Pitt tend in many respects to prove the unsatisfactory condition, at that time, of the Church of England. There was then, as some of its best friends have owned, but too much scope for the great and general improvement which has since ensued. There was then, at least in some cases, a low tone of feeling, such as in the present day we should deem scarcely possible. Here, for example, are some letters that passed between the Minister and the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, the brother of Earl Cornwallis.

"SIR, "Wimpole Street, June 10, 1791.

"After the various instances of neglect and contempt which Lord Cornwallis and I have experienced, not only in violation of repeated assurances, but of the strongest ties, it is impossible that I should not feel the late disappointment very deeply.

"With respect to the proposal concerning Salisbury, I have no hesitation in saying that the See of Salisbury cannot be in any respect an object to me. The only arrangement which promises an accommodation in my favour is the promotion of the Bishop of Lincoln to

[3] To the Duke of Portland, Coblentz, Oct. 14, 1791.

Salisbury, which would enable you to confer the Deanery of St. Paul's upon me.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"J. LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY."

"Downing Street, Saturday night,

"MY LORD, June 11, 1791.

"On my return to town this afternoon I found your Lordship's letter. I am willing to hope that on further consideration, and on recollecting all the circumstances, there are parts of that letter which you would yourself wish never to have written.

"My respect for your Lordship's situation, and my regard for Lord Cornwallis, prevent my saying more than that until that letter is recalled, your Lordship makes any further intercourse between you and me impossible. "I have the honour to be, &c.,

"W. PITT."

"SIR, "Wimpole Street, June 11, 1791.

"Under the very great disappointment which I have felt upon the late occasion, I am much concerned that I was induced to make use of expressions in my letter to you of which I have since repented, and which upon consideration I beg leave to retract, and I hope that they will make no unfavourable impression upon your mind.

"Whatever may be your thoughts respecting the subject matter of the letter, I trust that you will have the candour to pardon those parts of it which may appear to be wanting in due and proper respect to you, and believe me to have the honour, &c.,

"J. LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY."

"MY LORD, "Downing Street, June 12, 1791.

"I have this morning received the honour of your Lordship's letter, dated the 11th, and have great satisfaction in being enabled to dismiss from my mind any impression occasioned by a paragraph in the former letter which I received from you.

"With respect to any further arrangement, I can only say that I have no reason to believe that the Bishop of Lincoln would wish to remove to Salisbury; but if he were, I should certainly have no hesitation in recommending your Lordship for the Deanery of St. Paul's.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"W. PITT."[4]

It has sometimes been alleged that Mr. Pitt was not judicious in his Ecclesiastical appointments or preferments. Perhaps indeed neither Mr. Pitt nor yet any other Minister in the reign of George the Third showed sufficient care to seek out or to call forth rising talents in the Church. But on the other hand there were many instances in which Pitt rejected the most powerful recommendations rather than fail to reward an humble course of parish duties. Here is one letter in proof which I select from a later year. It is addressed to the Earl of Carnarvon.

"MY LORD, "Downing Street, Jan. 21, 1797.

"I ought to make very many apologies for having in the succession of business left your Lordship so long in suspense on the subject of the applications which

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[4] On the 8th of February, 1794, we find the Bishop of Lichfield announced in the Gazette as Dean of Durham.

I had the honour of receiving from you relative to the Living of Newbury. Allow me to assure you that it would afford me very sincere satisfaction if I felt myself at liberty to show my attention to your wishes, and especially on an occasion when they are so naturally entitled to it. But I trust you will allow for the circumstances which preclude me from doing so, when I say that Mr. Roe, a gentleman who has for some time officiated there, has on that ground been recommended to me with such peculiar testimonies of his exemplary conduct and of the good effects produced by it in the town, that I should not feel justified in proposing any other person to His Majesty in preference to him. I certainly should not on any less urgent ground have hesitated to support your Lordship's recommendation.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"W. PITT."

At the close of 1791 Mr. Pitt wrote as follows to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. John Moore since 1783):

"MY LORD, "Downing Street, Dec. 16, 1791.

"I took the liberty of mentioning to your Grace not long since that some suggestions had been brought under my view respecting a general commutation of Tithes for a Corn Rent conformably to a plan which was adopted in the instance of two or three parishes by separate Enclosure Bills in the course of the last Session. A paper has been drawn up at my desire, stating shortly the principal considerations which seem to arise out of this proposal, and according to your Grace's permission I have the honour of enclosing it.

"I am very far from venturing to form a decided opinion respecting the possibility or expediency of any new arrangement, or the merits of this particular plan.

But the whole subject seems to me, especially at the present moment, to be of the most serious importance, and there are appearances which but too strongly indicate that it is likely to be agitated in different parts of the country.

"It seems, therefore, very desirable that any proposal which aims at obviating the present complaints, and at the same time securing the interests of the Church, should engage the early attention of those who wish well to the Establishment, in order that they may be enabled to give a proper direction to the business, if it can be put into any practicable shape, or after full examination to resist on the best grounds anything of a mischievous tendency. With this view I felt anxious to submit this idea to your Grace's consideration.

"If there are any persons with whom your Grace may think proper to consult confidentially on any part of the business, I would beg that the communication with which I have troubled you may be understood to be entirely a private one.

"Possibly as the Archbishop of York is now at Bath, your Grace may have an opportunity of conversing with him and of showing him the papers, which I should be very desirous of his seeing.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"W. PITT."

I do not find the Archbishop's reply among Mr. Pitt's papers. Since, however, the measure in question was no further pursued, it is plain that the answer must have been discouraging. All friends of the Church will, I think, join me in lamenting the error of judgment that was here committed. Why should the general Commutation of Tithes—a measure accomplished with

such general assent and such excellent result some forty years later—have been without necessity, and through many scenes of strife, laid aside when a public-spirited Minister proposed it?

Most anxiously through the whole of 1791 did the eyes of Europe continue fixed on France. At the beginning of the year it was hoped that some main leaders of the Revolution, alarmed at its excesses, might be found both willing and able to restrain them. It was on Mirabeau, above all, that such hopes depended. But his untimely death, which occurred on the 2nd of April, left the vessel of the State with no competent pilot, and drifting to the shoals.

Not many months elapsed ere the King, provoked beyond endurance by almost daily insults and wrongs, determined to make an effort for his deliverance. Accompanied by the Queen and his two children, and bearing a passport under a feigned name, he secretly set out from Paris on the 21st of June, by no means designing, as his enemies have alleged, a restoration of the *Ancien Régime*, but rather the establishment, under better auspices, of a limited Constitutional Monarchy. Had he succeeded in reaching the frontier town Montmédy, the destinies not of France only but of Europe might probably have been changed. Unhappily at Varennes the features of Louis were recognised by the post-master, Drouet; the Royal party was arrested and led back to Paris in mob triumph. Henceforth the King had little choice. In the month of September he accepted the new Constitution which the Assembly had framed, and took an oath to its observance. Then, as

had been previously determined, the Assembly dissolved itself, as considering its work completed, and making way for the new legislative body.

One effect of the troubles in France was a concert of measures between the Emperor Leopold and the King of Prussia. The animosity that once existed between them had now ceased, partly from the Convention of Reichenbach, which removed the causes of dispute, and partly from the retirement of Count Hertzberg, who of all the Prussian Ministers was the most averse to the Austrian cause. In the month of August the two Sovereigns met at Pilnitz, a country palace of the Elector of Saxony. Their main object was to confer on the affairs of Poland, but they had likewise begun to feel that the cause of Monarchy itself might be imperilled by the issue of events at Paris. On this last point the Royal deliberations were quickened by the arrival at Dresden of the Comte d'Artois and M. de Calonne in the name of the Emigrant party. The two Sovereigns agreed to publish the celebrated Declaration of Pilnitz. In that document it is stated that the situation of the King of France was a matter of common interest, and that to set right that situation, even by force of arms, they would invoke the concert and assistance of the other European powers.

Besides this open and avowed declaration, it was immediately alleged by the leading Frenchmen on the Revolutionary side, that there were other and secret articles providing for the partition of France. But there appears to have been no just ground for such a charge. "As far as we have been able to trace," said

Mr. Pitt, on a long subsequent occasion, "the Declaration of Pilnitz referred to the imprisonment of Louis the Sixteenth. Its immediate view was to effect his deliverance, if a concert sufficiently extensive could be formed for that purpose. It left the internal state of France to be decided by the King restored to his liberty, with the free consent of the States of the kingdom, and it did not contain one word relative to the dismemberment of France."[5]

The Declaration of Pilnitz raised to a high pitch the spirits of the Emigrants. Their chief men, now reinforced by the arrival of Monsieur, the King's next brother, from France, held their councils at Coblentz, and set on foot negotiations with several other Potentates. Both the Empress of Russia and the King of Sweden showed a strong disposition to take up arms in their cause. But when it came to that positive issue, the prudence of Leopold, and his alarm for Flanders, were proof against their violent counsels. Frederick William, in like manner, wavered and drew back. Neither of these Sovereigns was in truth willing to act without England. And though the personal wishes of George the Third might be with them, the Cabinet of London had from the first expressed itself determined to observe a strict neutrality.

Thus, in its result, the famous Declaration of Pilnitz bore little or no fruit. And when a few weeks afterwards M. de Calonne, in the name of the Emigrant Princes at Coblentz, stated to the Court of London a plan which they had formed for the invasion of France,

[5] Speech of Feb. 3, 1800.

and for the effecting of a counter-Revolution, and when he most earnestly implored the loan of three or four hundred thousand pounds to assist them in that object, he met with a positive refusal on the part of Mr. Pitt.[6]

In England the conflict of opinions between the friends of the French Revolution and its adversaries grew keener and keener. Unhappily they came to a violent issue at Birmingham, in the person of Dr. Priestley, who, since the recent death of Dr. Price, might be regarded as the leader of the Unitarians in England. Joseph Priestley was a man of considerable scientific as well as controversial fame. For a long period he had been the librarian and chosen friend of Lord Shelburne. The breach which ensued between them has been ascribed to the increasing licence of his published speculations. On leaving Bowood he had fixed his residence and built his meeting-house at Birmingham, where he was further known as an ardent admirer of the Revolutionary principles of France. He designed, in conjunction with several other persons in 1791, to celebrate the 14th of July, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, by a public dinner.

On the other hand, the people of Birmingham, far from concurring in his sentiments, either religious or political, were at that time stanch for Church and King. They viewed the proposed entertainment with great disfavour, and they were further incensed by the appearance, some days beforehand, of a seditious hand-bill inviting them to dine, and "tyrants to beware." It was not known from whom that hand-bill proceeded, but

[6] Life by Bishop Tomline, vol. iii. p. 440.

its reflections upon the King and the Parliament were of such a kind, that a reward of 100*l.* was offered for the detection of the author and printer.

Violence like this called forth a most unjustifiable reaction. When on the appointed day some eighty persons (Priestley himself, however, not among them) repaired to the chosen tavern to eat their dinner and make their speeches, they found the doors beset by an angry crowd, which received them with hissing and yelling. Towards evening a riot began. First the windows of the inn were broken. Then proceeding from outrage to outrage, the mob demolished Dr. Priestley's and another meeting-house, as also the dwellings of Dr. Priestley and of several of his friends, both in the town and neighbourhood. Drunkenness, as is almost invariably the case in English riots, mingled largely with destruction; and, in other cases, the rioters levied sums of money as the price of their forbearance. The magistrates were for some time unable to suppress these tumults, and commencing as they did on the Thursday, they continued at intervals until the Sunday evening, when three troops of horse arrived.

Dr. Priestley, by these destructive outrages, lost not only his household furniture, his valuable library and his philosophical instruments, but also manuscripts which the toil of his remaining years might not suffice to restore. At the assizes, held in the ensuing month, great pains were taken to bring the offenders to justice. There were fifteen persons apprehended, four convicted, and three hanged. Next spring the other persons, eleven in number, whose property had suffered most,

brought actions for damages against the neighbouring Hundreds; and they recovered, on the whole, in Worcestershire 5,504*l.*, and in Warwickshire 21,456*l.* These sums, large as they appear, were below the amount that had been claimed; and loud complaints were heard against the "ignorant Juries" which allowed compensation only for such objects as chairs and tables, but not for manuscripts or philosophical instruments whose value they could not understand.

Nor were other reproaches wanting against both the Magistrates and the Clergy of the Birmingham district. It was alleged that in their horror of Dissent, they had some secret sympathy with the riots, and had failed to show sufficient heartiness, either in their suppression or their punishment. A charge of this kind is easily made. In the case before us, it appears to me not in the least established.

Dr. Priestley, though secure from further attacks or losses in London, found even there the national feeling so strong against him, that after no long interval he embarked for the United States. As in France the Revolutionary leaders ascribed every evil that befell them to the villanous machination of Pitt, so did their friends in England not scruple to declare that the Birmingham riots had been purposely stirred up by the same abominable statesman. Mr. Coleridge, then one of that party, begins a sonnet as follows:—

"Though, roused by that dark Vizier, Riot rude
Have driven our Priestley o'er the ocean swell,
Though Superstition and her wolfish brood
Bay his mild radiance . . . . . "

CHAPTER XVI.

1792—1793.

The Budget — Reduction of forces — Pitt's great Speech on the Slave Trade — Improvements in the administration of the law — Pitt's Loan Bill — Opposed by Thurlow — His dismissal from office — "The Friends of the People" — Mr. Grey's notice on Parliamentary Reform — Resisted by Pitt — Death of the Emperor Leopold — Assassination of the King of Sweden — The French declare war against Austria — Seditious publications — Negotiations with the Whig party — Death of the Earl of Guilford — Pitt appointed Warden of the Cinque Ports — Invasion of French territory by the Prussians — Partition of Poland — The Allies defeated at Valmy — Retreat of the Duke of Brunswick — National Convention — Victory of Dumouriez at Jemmapes — Riots in England and Scotland — Counter-demonstrations — Prosecution of Paine — Lord Loughborough Chancellor — Execution of Louis XVI. — The French declare war against England, Holland, and Spain.

PARLIAMENT met again on the last day of January, 1792. It was opened by the King in person. His Majesty began by announcing the happy event of the marriage of the Duke of York. He promised the production of papers to explain the former negotiations with the Court of Petersburg. He expressed a confident hope of the maintenance of peace, and as the best pledge of that confidence, recommended an immediate reduction in our naval and military establishments and a proportionate relief of the people from the weight of taxation.

To submit these recommendations in a more definite shape, Pitt brought forward his Budget as the first business of the Session. The revenue, he said, had

been constantly increasing under the influence of the national prosperity during the last few years. Its average for the last four was 16,200,000*l.*, or 400,000*l.* in excess of the annual expenditure for the same period. Of this surplus he proposed to add 200,000*l.* yearly to the Sinking Fund, and to take off taxes to the amount of the other moiety. The taxes which he proposed to repeal were the additional tax upon malt laid on last year, and the imposts upon female servants, carts and waggons, houses having less than seven windows, and the last half-penny per pound upon candles. He held out a most encouraging prospect of still further relief from the repeal of taxes within the next fifteen years; "for although," said he, "we must not count with certainty on the continuance of our present prosperity during such an interval, yet unquestionably there never was a time in the history of this country when from the situation of Europe we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace than we may at the present moment."[1]

Proceeding on this conviction, Pitt asked the House to vote only 16,000 seamen, being 2,000 less than last year. As to the land-forces, he proposed not to renew but on the contrary allow to expire the subsidiary treaty with Hesse. By this and by some other savings which he explained, he trusted to reduce the cost of the military establishments by 200,000*l.* a-year.

From these reductions and from the prophecy of peace which he had hazarded, it is plain how firmly the Prime Minister was set against any interference

[1] Parl. Hist. vol. xxix. p. 326.

with France. So high was then the public credit that at the beginning of the year Pitt intended to propose a reduction of the Four per Cents. to Three-and-a-Half per Cents. The draft of a Bill for that purpose was found among his papers. But on further consideration he resolved to defer the measure until the next Session, when he hoped to be able to reduce these funds to Three per Cents. Little did he think what that next Session would bring forth, and that not only many years but tens of years would pass ere any opportunity for reduction would re-occur.

In his speech on the Budget this year—one of the greatest and most comprehensive financial statements that he ever made—it is striking to find the Prime Minister ascribe the merit of his system in no small degree to the author of the 'Wealth of Nations'—"an author," said Pitt, "now unhappily no more; whose extensive knowledge of detail and depth of philosophical research will, I believe, furnish the best solution to every question connected with the history of commerce or with the systems of political economy."

The financial policy of Pitt had been crowned with so much success in the past, and seemed so full of promise for the future, as to leave little room for objection to Fox and Fox's friends. They hoped to succeed better on the production of the Ockzakow papers. Upon these a direct motion of censure of the Government was founded by Mr. Whitbread. The debate was continued with great vehemence and singular ability for two nights. But it soon appeared that the same gentlemen who had been willing to vote with the Opposition in the preceding year on purpose

to avoid a war, were by no means inclined to repeat that vote where the object was only to displace a Minister. Thus in the division Fox found no increase to his already diminished and still diminishing forces.

The debate which thus concluded is chiefly memorable—and will be so to the latest ages—from Fox's own share in it. His speech upon the Russian armament on the 1st of March, 1792, has been ranked by the best judges with that on the Westminster Scrutiny in 1785 and that on the French armament in 1803, as the three highest efforts that his admirable powers of oratory ever achieved.

In that discussion there also took part—and it was the first time that he spoke in Parliament—a very young man, Mr. Robert Banks Jenkinson, the eldest son of Lord Hawkesbury; in after years Prime Minister and Earl of Liverpool. In closing the debate that evening, Mr. Pitt took occasion to pay a high and just compliment to that speech, "as a specimen of clear eloquence, strong sense, justness of reasoning, and extensive knowledge."

On one question of great importance the oratory of both Pitt and Fox even though combined could not prevail. This was the immediate abolition of the Slave Trade, for which on the 2nd of April Mr. Wilberforce moved. There was no longer any direct opposition. That, if not conscience, decency forbade. Both Mr. Jenkinson and Mr. Dundas acknowledged the Slave Trade to be indefensible. Yet each in different ways sought to elude the proposal before them. Mr. Jenkinson said that he desired to render the Slave Trade unnecessary by a progressive improvement in the

treatment of the slaves, and by their consequently more prolific marriages. He had framed some Resolutions with that view, for which 87 Members voted. But far greater favour attended the more moderate motion of Mr. Dundas that the word "gradually" should be inserted. Both the Prime Minister and the chief of his opponents stood up warmly for the original words; and the speech of Pitt on this occasion is regarded as one of the very greatest that he ever made. Only a few hours afterwards Wilberforce wrote as follows to a friend: "I take up my pen to inform you that after a very long debate (we did not separate till near seven this morning), my motion for immediate abolition was put by, though supported strenuously by Mr. Fox, and by Mr. Pitt with more energy and ability than were almost ever exerted in the House of Commons. Windham, who has no love for Pitt, tells me that Fox and Grey, with whom he walked home after the debate, agreed with him in thinking Pitt's speech one of the most extraordinary displays of eloquence they had ever heard; for the last twenty minutes he really seemed to be inspired. . . . . He was dilating upon the future prospects of civilizing Africa, a topic which I had suggested to him in the morning."

Here are some extracts, though abridged, of this justly celebrated peroration:—"There was a time, Sir, when the very practice of the Slave Trade prevailed among us. Slaves, as we may read in Henry's 'History of Great Britain,' were formerly an established article in our exports. 'Great numbers,' he says, 'were exported like cattle from the British coast, and were to be seen

exposed for sale in the Roman market.' But it is the slavery in Africa which is now called on to furnish the alleged proofs that Africa labours under a natural incapacity for civilization; that Providence never intended her to rise above a state of barbarism; that Providence has irrecoverably doomed her to be only a nursery for slaves for us free and civilized Europeans. Allow of this principle as applied to Africa, and I should be glad to know why it might not also have been applied to ancient and uncivilized Britain? Why might not some Roman Senator, reasoning on the principles of some Hon. gentlemen, and pointing to British barbarians, have predicted with equal boldness, 'There is a people that will never rise to civilization; there is a people destined never to be free'? We, Sir, have long since emerged from barbarism; we have almost forgotten that we were once barbarians. There is, indeed, one thing wanting to complete the contrast and to clear us altogether from the imputation of acting even to this hour as barbarians; for we continue even to this hour a barbarous traffic in slaves.

"Sir, I trust we shall no longer continue this commerce, to the destruction of every improvement on that wide continent; and shall not consider ourselves as conferring too great a boon in restoring its inhabitants to the rank of human beings. I trust we shall not think ourselves too liberal, if, by abolishing the slave-trade, we give them the same common chance of civilization with other parts of the world; and that we shall now allow to Africa the opportunity—the hope—the prospect of attaining to the same blessings which we

ourselves, through the favourable dispensations of Divine Providence, have been permitted, at a much more early period, to enjoy. If we listen to the voice of reason and duty, and pursue this night the line of conduct which they prescribe, some of us may live to see a reverse of that picture from which we now turn our eyes with shame and regret. We may live to behold the natives of Africa engaged in the calm occupations of industry, in the pursuits of a just and legitimate commerce. We may behold the beams of science and philosophy breaking in upon their land, which, at some happy period in still later times, may blaze with full lustre; and joining their influence to that of pure religion, may illuminate and invigorate the most distant extremities of that immense continent. Then may we hope that even Africa, though last of all the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length, in the evening of her days, those blessings which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world. Then also will Europe, participating in her improvement and prosperity, receive an ample recompense for the tardy kindness, if kindness it can be called, of no longer hindering that continent from extricating herself out of the darkness which, in other more fortunate regions, has been so much more speedily dispelled.

'Nos . . . primus equis Oriens afflavit anhelis;
Illic sera rubens accendit lumina Vesper.'"

I have heard it related by some who at that time were Members of Parliament, that the first beams of

the rising sun shot through the windows of the House in the midst of this final passage, and seemed, as Pitt looked upwards, to suggest to him without premeditation the eloquent simile and the noble Latin lines with which he concluded.

But all this and much more was in vain. Dividing at near seven in the morning, the House adopted the "gradually" of Mr. Dundas by 193 against 125. The result of the whole was, therefore, a long and weary postponement. For this result besides the strength and the exertions of the West India planters there are two other main causes to be assigned. First, the warning, as was supposed, held out by the recent bloody scenes in St. Domingo; and next, the strong objections, now coming to be generally known, of the King.

In this Session the Legislature, to its honour, achieved two great improvements in the administration of the law. The duty of a Magistrate in Middlesex had become very different from the duty of a Magistrate in other counties. It had grown so irksome and laborious that few gentlemen of property and character were found willing to undertake it without emolument. Thus it had fallen into the hands of inferior persons who acted in the expectation of fees, and were known by the name of "trading justices." To remedy the complaints which they justly provoked, a Bill was now introduced under the sanction of the Government enabling the King to establish seven public offices for the administration of justice in different parts of London, the City excepted, and to appoint three Magistrates to each of them at stated salaries. These Magistrates were to employ a limited number of con-

stables, who should have power to apprehend reputed thieves. The measure in its progress was warmly withstood by Fox, who objected first that the influence of the Crown would be increased by the appointment of Magistrates with salaries, and next that under the vague term of reputed thieves the liberty of the subject might be invaded. Nevertheless, the measure passed, but as a mere experiment, to remain in force only for four years, at the end of which term it was with very general assent re-enacted.

The second and far greater improvement achieved this year in legislation was from the renewal of Fox's Libel Bill. It was supported by Pitt, and passed the Commons with ease. But in the Lords it had to encounter the hostility of Thurlow. At first his hostility was in some measure dissembled. He took refuge in the means which in his profession are termed "dilatory pleas." He was anxious to consult the Judges; he was anxious to deliberate more fully. At length when after long delays the Second Reading came, he endeavoured to throw out the Bill, combining for that object with Lord Bathurst, his predecessor on the Woolsack, and Lord Kenyon, his friend the Chief Justice. On the other hand the Second Reading was moved by the venerable Camden, still the President of the Council. He was now almost fourscore, and bowed beneath the infirmities of age; but as he spoke, leaning on his staff, maintaining to the last those rights of Juries which he had so constantly defended, his flagging spirit seemed to revive and his former eloquence to kindle.

This debate, which began on the 16th of May, was

concluded on the 21st, when the Bill was carried by a majority of 57 votes against 32. "Fox and Pitt," says Lord Macaulay, "are fairly entitled to divide the high honour of having added to our Statute-Book the inestimable law which places the liberty of the Press under the protection of juries."

On the day when this debate commenced, Thurlow was from other circumstances in the very crisis of his Ministerial fate. We have already seen how froward and resentful his conduct to Pitt had grown. It does not appear that he had or could have any settled plan to join or to form any other Government than Mr. Pitt's. But while indulging to the utmost his jealous spleen, he reckoned on the continued favour and forgiveness of the King.

In the present Session it had been part of Pitt's financial policy to frame a Bill in respect to future loans. He desired for the sake of the public credit to enact that in borrowing hereafter, one per cent. besides the dividends upon the new Stock should be paid to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, so that every new loan might be accompanied by its own Sinking Fund. The Bill for this object passed the Commons without difficulty. In the Lords there was no notice either in public or in private of any objection on the part of Thurlow. Suddenly, the Bill being in Committee, on the 15th of May the Chancellor started up and ridiculed the idea of binding a future Minister by the directions of the present Parliament. "In short," said he, "the scheme is nugatory and impracticable; the inaptness

of the project is equal to the vanity of the attempt." And finally calling for a division in a thin House, the Clause in question was carried by a majority of only six.

Being immediately apprised of these proceedings in the House of Lords, the King wrote the same evening to Mr. Pitt, strongly condemning the conduct of the Chancellor, yet still hoping that an entire breach would be avoided. But the bounds of endurance had been far outstepped. Next morning Mr. Pitt wrote to the King in most decided terms, and at the same time announced to Lord Thurlow in the following letter the course which he had felt it his duty to pursue.

"Downing Street, Wednesday,
May 16, 1792.

"My Lord,

"I think it right to take the earliest opportunity of acquainting your Lordship that being convinced of the impossibility of His Majesty's service being any longer carried on to advantage while your Lordship and myself both remain in our present situations, I have felt it my duty to submit that opinion to His Majesty, humbly requesting His Majesty's determination thereupon.

"I have the honour, &c.,
"W. Pitt."

The King's decision was promptly taken. On the same day he addressed to Mr. Secretary Dundas the following letter, which I have found among the papers of Mr. Dundas of Arniston.

"Queen's House; May 16, 1792,
40 m. past 6, P.M.

"From the sorrow I feel at taking up my pen to direct Mr. Dundas to wait on the Lord Chancellor, I can easily conceive how unpleasant the conveying the following message must be.

"Mr. Dundas is to acquaint the Lord Chancellor that Mr. Pitt has this day stated the impossibility of his sitting any longer in Council with the Lord Chancellor: it remains therefore for my decision which of the two shall retire from my service. The Chancellor's own penetration must convince him that however strong my personal regard, nay affection, is for him, that I must feel the removal of Mr. Pitt impossible with the good of my service. I wish therefore that the Great Seal may be delivered to me at the time most agreeable to the Lord Chancellor, and least inconvenient to either the business of the House of Lords or Court of Chancery. Perhaps the Long Vacation might be the time most proper; but of this the Lord Chancellor must be the best judge. "GEORGE R."

In this manner fell the arrogant Thurlow, a victim of his own arrogance, without support from any one of his colleagues, without sympathy from any section of the people. We are told that his complaints were loud, though surely most unreasonable, of the ingratitude and faithlessness of Princes. He was allowed to remain in office a few weeks longer to give judgment in some causes which he had already heard. But immediately after the Prorogation he was directed to repair to St. James's Palace and give back to the King the Great Seal, which was forthwith placed in

the hands of three Commissioners. Thurlow received, however, a parting favour from his Sovereign—a new patent of peerage, with remainder to his nephews. Of his own he had only illegitimate children.

Among those who in England had inclined to schemes of Parliamentary Reform, the great majority was alienated and alarmed by the progress of events in France. On the minority those events produced an opposite effect, and thus, as most often occurs in such cases, the Reformers increased in vehemence precisely as they diminished in numbers. During this winter there was formed in London an association of about one hundred persons, comprising twenty-eight Members of Parliament, and calling themselves the "Friends of the People." Fox himself did not belong to this new body, but his most intimate friends were among its founders. There were Grey, Sheridan, and James Lord Maitland, who, born in 1759, had succeeded his father in 1789 as Earl of Lauderdale, and was now the principal spokesman of Fox in the House of Lords. "For my part," writes the King, "I cannot see any substantial difference in their being joined in debate by Mr. Fox and his not being a member of that Society." They issued an Address declaring their aim to be a more equal system of representation, and passed a Resolution calling on Mr. Grey to introduce the question in the ensuing year. Mr. Grey accordingly gave notice in the House of Commons that in the course of the next Session he would bring forward a motion in favour of Parliamentary Reform. Even the mere notice gave rise to a

keen debate. The subject, it was thought, would prove embarrassing to Mr. Pitt; but he delivered his sentiments upon it candidly and clearly. "I retain my opinion," he said, "of the propriety of a Reform in Parliament, if it could be obtained without mischief or danger. But I confess I am not sanguine enough to hope that a Reform at this time can safely be attempted. . . . . At this time, and on this subject, every rational man has two things to consider. These are the probability of success, and the risk to be run by the attempt. Looking at it in both views, I see nothing but discouragement. I see no chance of succeeding in the attempt in the first place; and I see great danger of anarchy and confusion in the second."

This debate took place on the last day of April, at the threshold of serious public dangers, and when upon the Continent at least a war had already begun. Eager as were the Emigrants and the Sovereigns in communication with them to march against Revolutionary France, there was an equal eagerness for conflict on the part of the Jacobin chiefs. They had complained to the Court of Vienna of the presence of the Emigrants near their frontier, and were incensed at not receiving the full satisfaction they demanded. But above all the Jacobin leaders saw that a conflict would give them the best chance to prevail in their ultimate ends—to overthrow the established Monarchy and religion of France—and to set up a levelling republic. Others, such as General Dumouriez, might be less keen for internal changes, but looked forward, as they justly might, to personal distinction in a foreign war. War then became a

favourite cry with the Clubs at Paris—war above all against Leopold as the brother of Marie Antoinette.

Such being already the temper, for the most part, of the ruling men in France, there occurred in the month of March two events that tended still further to elate them. The Emperor Leopold died at Vienna in the prime of life and after only a few hours' illness. His eldest son Francis became King of Hungary and Bohemia, and, before his power was yet established or his election as Emperor secured, might seem a far less formidable enemy.

Of all the Sovereigns at that period, Gustavus of Sweden was by far the most ardent and active in his zeal against the French Revolution. He was fully prepared to put himself at the head of an invading army when his career was cut short by the resentment he had provoked at home. In the midst of a masked ball he received a mortal wound. A pistol-shot struck him from the hand of Ankarstrom, until recently a captain in his army. It may serve to show the feelings of the time among the Jacobins at Paris that they loudly extolled this assassination as a noble and praiseworthy deed, and that the bust of the assassin was placed in the hall of their meeting, side by side with Brutus.

The King of Sweden was succeeded by his only son Gustavus the Fourth, who was not yet of age; and his brother, the Duke of Sudermania, who undertook the Regency, immediately renounced all aggressive schemes. Exulting at the secession of Sweden, and still more at the blow which had produced it, the

French rulers rushed headlong into hostilities with Austria. The ill-fated Louis was induced himself to recommend that course in a speech to the Assembly; and, on the 20th of April accordingly, the Assembly, in virtue of those sovereign rights which it had usurped, issued a Declaration of War against the King of Hungary and Bohemia. The King of Prussia was not mentioned, yet he had already announced, through his envoy at Paris, his determination to make common cause with the Empire if attacked.

It was by no means upon fleets and armies that the chiefs of the French Revolution mainly at this time relied. They built far higher hopes on the discontents and insurrections which they hoped to stir up in other countries as they had already in their own. "Our maxim is a clear one," said Merlin de Thionville, a short time afterwards: "war with Kings and peace with nations." "To these last," cried another patriot, "we must offer one plain choice — *La Fraternité ou la Mort.*" It was the old Mahometan option—the Koran or the sword.

Nor did they by any means confine their efforts to those nations with whose Kings they were already at strife. As regarded England, a whole host of tracts and handbills, paragraphs and pamphlets, was, within a few weeks, poured forth by the English press. Most of them seem to have been framed in conformity with the examples set at Paris, and circulated by the agency of two political Societies in London.

The first of these Societies was newly formed, and bore the name of the "London Corresponding Society."

It was computed at a later period to have about 6000 members, nearly all of the lower ranks. But it was absolutely governed by a secret Committee of only five or six, whose names were not made known to the Society at large.[2]

The second body, much less numerous and much less formidable, was called the "Society for Constitutional Information." "This," said Lord Chief Justice Eyre, "seems to me to be a mere club."[3] It had been founded some time since by Major John Cartwright, a gentleman of great zeal in the cause of Parliamentary Reform. It was not led by secret rulers nor did it rely on illiterate force, but had among its members many persons of education and accomplishments, as John Horne Tooke and Capel Lofft, Richard Sharpe and Thomas Holcroft, not all of whom, however, continued to attend the subsequent meetings.

But, whatever might be the origin of the publications at this period, their object was always the same. They appeared to have no other view than the incitement to tumult and sedition. All Kings were represented as tyrants; all Ministers as venal and corrupt; and all priests as hypocrites; while every kind of rule and subjection was denounced as slavery. Frequent attempts were made to distribute writings of this kind among the British soldiers or the British sailors.[4] And as to the other classes, the rich were held forth as the

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[2] See the account of this Society as given in 1794 by Sir John Mitford, then Solicitor-General. (Howell's State Trials, vol. xxv. p. 37.)

[3] Ibid., p. 731.

[4] See on this point the Speech of Lord Grenville, May 31, 1792.

natural enemies of the poor, who were consequently urged to rise and cast off their chains. In the same spirit and at the same period did Thomas Paine send forth the second part of his "Rights of Man."

So outrageous were these publications, and more especially this last, that Mr. Pitt felt it his duty to advise an authoritative step against them. On the 21st of May there appeared a Royal Proclamation "solemnly warning all our loving subjects" against "divers wicked and seditious writings."

The result of these writings, however, was not wholly for evil. Many men might be stirred and incited to sedition, but many others were shocked and terrified, and rallied round the Government. Many men who, though not disagreeing with Burke, had hitherto looked coldly on his efforts to stem the Revolutionary torrent, and regarded him mainly in the light of a disturber to their party politics, now for the first time felt—or for the first time manifested—sympathy with his opinions. So well known, indeed, were their just and patriotic alarms, that, before the Proclamation was issued, Mr. Pitt sent a copy of it to several Members of the Opposition in both Houses, and requested their advice and assistance.[5] He wished some of these gentlemen to move and second the Address in reply; but this, though they expressed their approbation, they declined to do.

This widening schism in the Opposition ranks was

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[5] Compare Lord Malmesbury's Diary of June 13, 1792, with Bishop Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. iii. p. 347.

plainly shown a few days afterwards, when Pepper Arden, then Master of the Rolls, moved an Address to the King in the House of Commons, thanking him for his Royal Proclamation, and assuring him of their warm support. Fox and Grey spoke with great vehemence against the Proclamation; the latter adding some bitter personal invectives on the Ministers. But other Members from the same benches—Lord Titchfield, eldest son of the Duke of Portland, Lord North, eldest son of the Earl of Guilford, Mr. Windham, and Mr. Thomas Grenville — rose to declare their approbation of the course which the Government had taken. So strong seemed to be this feeling in the House, that Grey, though he had moved an amendment, did not call for a division.

The Address thus carried was sent to the Lords, and their concurrence to it was requested, so that it might be presented to the King as the joint Address of the two Houses. In the debate which ensued the Prince of Wales, rising for the first time in that assembly, expressed, in some graceful sentences, his abhorrence of the recent publications and his approval of the Royal Proclamation—a course not a little significant when we remember the close connexion of Fox with His Royal Highness. To the same effect spoke also the leading Members of the Opposition of that day—the Duke of Portland, Lord Spencer, Lord Stormont, Lord Rawdon, and Lord Porchester. On the other hand, Lord Lauderdale moved nearly the same amendment as had Mr. Grey, but he did not divide, and in the debate was supported only by Lord Lansdowne,

who, since his retirement from office, stood unconnected with party, but who of late had shown himself inclined to go all lengths with the French Revolution.

The speech of Lord Lauderdale on this occasion was marked by especial acrimony. He fell with a kind of rage upon the Duke of Richmond, who, having once supported Annual Parliaments and Unrestricted Suffrage, and being now disinclined to all Reform, might seem, no doubt, a tempting object for attack. "There is a camp," cried Lauderdale, "to be formed at Bagshot to overawe the people of the capital and to stifle their efforts for Reform. I declare I am glad the noble Duke is to command that camp. If apostacy can justify promotion, he is the most fit person for that command, General Arnold alone excepted." The Duke started up at once, and denounced these "impertinent personalities." The consequence was that Lord Lauderdale challenged the Duke of Richmond, and was himself challenged by General Arnold. In the former case the quarrel was adjusted by the interposition of friends, but in the latter case a duel ensued. General Arnold came attended by Lord Hawke as second, and Lord Lauderdale by Mr. Fox. The General fired first, without effect, and the Earl declined to return the shot, upon which the seconds interposed and the matter terminated.[6]

The concert between Mr. Pitt and some members of

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[6] Ann. Register, 1792, part ii. p. 30. It is strange to find no mention whatever of this duel in Mr. Sparks's Life of Arnold.

the Opposition was further continued. It was his wish, by their accession to office, to give new strength to his Government in the stormy times which he saw approaching. Burke urged this junction with zeal, though declaring that he would accept no office for himself. Another warm auxiliary appeared in Lord Loughborough—above all, since the Great Seal had been vacant by the dismissal of Lord Thurlow.

Lord Loughborough had several conferences (as related in Lord Malmesbury's Journal) with Pitt and Dundas. Here Pitt explained his views with entire frankness. He assured Loughborough that "it was his wish to unite cordially and heartily, not in the way of bargain, but to form a strong and united Ministry. His only doubts were about Fox, who he was afraid had gone too far." Even as to Fox, Pitt declared that he had no personal objection, if Fox would really take part with the Duke of Portland. Fox, however, showed himself averse to any junction; the Duke of Portland owned a junction to be the right course, but could not make up his mind to it; the statesmen went out of town, and thus for the time the matter ended. "You see how it is," said Burke; "Mr. Fox's coach stops the way."

The Session was closed by the King on the 15th of June. His Majesty said that he had seen with great concern the commencement of hostilities in different parts of Europe, but should make it his principal care to secure to his people the uninterrupted blessings of peace.

In August of this year died the Earl of Guilford—if

not the greatest or the firmest, certainly the most amiable of Ministers. He left vacant the Lord Wardenship of the Cinque Ports, a place for life, and with a salary at that time of 3000*l.* a-year. The King, on the very day that he received the news, wrote to Mr. Pitt, declaring that he would receive no recommendation from him for the vacant office, being determined to bestow it on Mr. Pitt himself. Knowing that Mr. Pitt had gone to Burton Pynsent, the King sent his letter to Mr. Dundas for transmission, and added the following lines:—

"Windsor, Aug. 6, 1792.

"The enclosed is my letter to Mr. Pitt, acquainting him with my having fixed on him for the office of Warden of the Cinque Ports. Mr. Dundas is to forward it to the West, and accompany it with a few lines expressing that I will not admit of this favour being declined. I desire Lord Chatham may also write, and that Mr. Dundas will take the first opportunity of acquainting Lord Grenville with the step I have taken.

"G. R."

In this case, perhaps unprecedented in our annals, we find as great a pressure upon a Minister to accept, as there ever was upon a Sovereign to bestow an office. Mr. Pitt gratefully accepted the offer so kindly made; and on his return from Somersetshire, he hastened to express his thanks to His Majesty at Windsor. From thence, where he appears to have been General Harcourt's guest, he wrote to Lady Chatham:

"St. Leonard's Hill, Aug. 13, 1792.

"I arrived here yesterday after a very pleasant journey, but from the heat of the weather too late to

pay my duty at Windsor before dinner, as I had intended. I had an opportunity, however, of doing so on the terrace in the evening, and of receiving a personal confirmation of every gracious sentiment which had been so fully expressed already. I am here on a spot which appears beautiful even after Burton, but which could not make Burton appear less so in recollection, even independent of every thing else which it has to endear it, and which can be found no where else."

The disposal of the vacant office was in an especial manner gratifying to the King. His Majesty had for a long time past been anxious to secure a provision for his Minister in the event of his own decease. When in May, 1790, Mr. Pitt asked by letter for the reversion of a rich sinecure, a Tellership of the Exchequer, in favour of one of Lord Auckland's sons, the King granted the request, but observed in his reply that he should have been better pleased if the appointment could have been of use to the Prime Minister himself.

The appointment of Mr. Pitt to the Cinque Ports also gave great pleasure to Mr. Pitt's followers and friends. But there was one exception, which Bishop Tomline thus relates: "A noble Duke who then held a high situation in His Majesty's Household applied to Mr. Pitt for this office, and took every opportunity of expressing his resentment that Mr. Pitt would not decline it in his favour. Three years afterwards he refused to give his vote for a Professorship at Cambridge, which vote he had in right of his official situation, according to Mr. Pitt's wishes, assigning his disappointment with respect

to the Cinque Ports as his reason. Yet the Noble Duke was suffered to retain his situation in the Household till his death in 1799." Bishop Tomline has withheld the name. But I see no just grounds for that suppression; and it becomes a mere form where, with a man of high rank—and with *Collins's Peerage* on the table—such dates and details are given. It was the Duke of Dorset, once ambassador at Paris, and afterwards Lord Steward.

During these summer months the fate of France—a Monarchy or a Republic—was decided. The King had presumed to use the prerogative left him by the Constitution for the dismissal of his Ministers. He had also by the same prerogative refused to sanction two Decrees which had been passed by the Assembly: the one for the formation of a camp round Paris, the other for the transportation of the non-juring priests. Thus provoked, the mob of Paris rose in fierce tumult on the 20th of June. Bands of the lowest orders incited by the Jacobin Club assailed the Tuileries, and thronged file by file into the presence of their Sovereign, who had ordered his Swiss Guards to forbear from all resistance. During several hours was Louis exposed to every form of insult; compelled to drink a health from a bottle which was tendered him, and to put on a red woollen cap which had become the emblem of the Jacobins. At length towards the evening Pétion, Mayor of Paris, came to his tardy rescue, and addressing to the rabble a few words not of rebuke, but commendation, bade them disperse and go home.

General La Fayette was at this time commander of the army on the northern frontier. The insults to the

King and the inroads upon the Constitution filled him with just concern. His feelings were those of an honourable man, but his conduct was that of a very weak one. He addressed a letter of remonstrance to the Assembly; he came to Paris and appeared with a speech at their bar; but took no measures to give effect to his opinions, and he sought no concert with the more active adherents of the King. On his return to his army he continued the same course of loquacious indecision, and speedily ceased to be an object of either hope or fear. Misled by overweening self-reliance, he still supposed that, like the superior genius of Mirabeau, he might stem the torrent which, on the contrary, hurried him along.

On the opposite side Francis King of Hungary had been elected Emperor on the 5th of July; and the King of Prussia combining with him had declared war against France. It was resolved to invade the French territory from the northern frontier with a large and well-disciplined army, and the command was entrusted to the Duke of Brunswick, the nephew and the pupil of Frederick the Great. With this army the Emigrants were intended to co-operate. But instead of placing them in the front ranks with the banner of the Fleurs de Lys unfurled to the friends of Monarchy in France, they were rather thrust to the rear as mere accessories to the war. The Prince de Condé with six thousand men was directed to act on the side of Alsace, and the Duke of Bourbon with four thousand on the side of Flanders, while another body was subsequently reserved for the siege of Thionville: all alike shut out from the prominent place—the proposed advance to Paris.

Still far more grievous were the errors of the Manifesto which the Duke of Brunswick, against his own better judgment, was induced to issue on the 25th of July. Far from any generous amnesty on the part of the French Princes, far from any respectful appeal to the loyalty of the French people, there was throughout a tone of arrogant superiority and vindictive violence. It drew most unjustly a distinction between the soldiers of the line and the National Guards; for these last, if taken with arms in their hands, were forthwith to be punished as rebels, whilst all the rigours of war, with the burning of their houses, were denounced against the inhabitants of towns or villages who should dare to defend themselves against the troops of the Allies. If the King and Queen were exposed to the smallest violence—if they were not at once placed in safety and restored to freedom—the city of Paris was to be given up to military execution and exposed to total destruction. Such threats from any foreign General, far indeed from at all intimidating, could not fail to stir up the utmost resentment and resistance in so martial a nation as the French.

At Paris there was no cessation in the endeavours of the Jacobins to inflame the public mind more and more against the Royal Family. Mob-law was almost supreme; another effort made it wholly so. A new insurrection which had been for some time past concerted broke forth on the 10th of August. The palace of the Tuileries was assailed by a furious multitude; the faithful Swiss were either slain in the defence or subsequently butchered in cold blood, as were also the

Royal servants and retainers. To such a dismal fate had fallen the proud inheritance of Louis the Fourteenth! The King—in truth a King no longer—became a fugitive from his palace; and, accompanied by his Consort, by his two children, and by his sister the Princess Elizabeth, he took refuge in the hall of the Assembly. There he found, however, only another class of foemen. Decrees were passed to suspend him from his Royal functions, and to summon a new legislative body under the name of a Convention, and as the next step to a Republic. Meanwhile the Royal Family were sent as close prisoners to the ancient stronghold of the Templar Knights at Paris.

These events were followed at the commencement of September by atrocities which even amidst the many evil deeds of the first French Revolution have attained a pre-eminence of shame. It was the massacre in the prisons of Paris. During four whole days did bands of miscreants proceeding in regular array from dungeon to dungeon draw forth the captives one by one and put them to death with hideous gibes. Six thousand persons at the lowest computation are stated to have perished;[7] and the assassins, as though proud to display some proofs of merit, eagerly besmeared themselves with the blood of their victims. Above all did they gloat over the death-pangs of any Catholic priests they found, nor were they disarmed even at the saint-like charity of some of these praying in their last moments for their

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[7] See on these numbers M. Thiers, Hist. Rev., vol. ii. p. 55. Some have reckoned them at twelve thousand in Paris alone.

murderers. The claims of sex, of youth, of beauty, were allowed—but they were claims only for superior refinements of cruelty. Thus in the case of the Princesse de Lamballe, young and beautiful, of exemplary life and of devoted friendship to the unhappy Queen, her head and heart were fixed upon a pike, and borne in savage triumph round the windows of the Temple, so as to meet at every turn the eyes of the Royal captives.

But where, it may be asked, was La Fayette? Where was he who had so loudly professed his respect for the Constitution—his zeal for law and order? These principles were still alive in his mind, but so dashed with doubts and misgivings as to deprive them of all practical effect.

Three Commissioners had been sent from Paris to the army, ostensibly to remonstrate with the General, but with a secret mission, as was thought, to supersede him. La Fayette anticipated their purpose by arresting them. But this was a solitary and unavailing act of vigour. Already by his vacillations had he lost his influence alike with soldier and civilian, with Republican and Royalist. In perhaps too hasty despair he resigned the contest, and on the night of the 19th of August fled beyond the frontier with only a handful of partisans. He desired to pass to Holland and embark for the United States, but within a few hours the small party was seized and made prisoners by an outpost of the Prussian army.

The treatment of La Fayette and of his principal companions by the two Allied Sovereigns was certainly in the highest degree both ungenerous and unwise.

Instead of welcoming their tardy but honest zeal for the liberation of Louis the Sixteenth, they were detained as prisoners of State. They were transferred from one dungeon to another, and closely confined, first at Wesel, and lastly at Olmütz. What temptation had now other men in France who had joined in the first enthusiasm of the Revolution to take part against its last excesses? What better treatment could they expect from the Allies than La Fayette had found?

There was another aggravation to the angry feelings aroused in France, first by the Manifesto of the Prussian, and next by the imprisonment of the French, General. That aggravation came from the east of Europe. Might not the dismemberment of France by the Allied Sovereigns be justly apprehended, when at the very same period the dismemberment of Poland was actually effected?

There had been in the preceding year a reform of the Constitution of Poland, framed on sound principles, and with warm assent from the people. But a small and selfish band, murmuring against it, had appealed to Russia for aid; and Catherine had eagerly seized the pretext of dictation to her weaker neighbours. In the spring and summer of 1792 she sent to Poland first a haughty Declaration, and next a powerful army. On the other hand the Poles from King Stanislas downwards displayed a noble spirit for their national rights. A large body of troops was mustered which in two pitched actions encountered the Russians with great bravery and some success. The General-in-Chief was Prince Joseph Poniatowski, but far the highest renown

was gained by Kosciusko, the second in command, who had already distinguished himself in the American contest under the orders of Washington. Unhappily at this juncture the King of Prussia was induced by the lure of Thorn and Dantzic to make common cause with Catherine. Thus the Poles became greatly overmatched in numbers; and King Stanislas, losing heart, had recourse to negotiations instead of arms. The ignominious result was the second partition of Poland. The King of Prussia acquired Thorn and Dantzic, and the Empress one-half of Lithuania. It is clear how much this iniquitous confederacy was aided and secured from foreign interruption by the clamour raised a few months before against the Russian armament in England.

Besides the several causes of suspicion and resentment which I have now enumerated, the tardiness of the Duke of Brunswick was another fatal obstacle to the cause of the Allies. His Manifesto was dated the 25th of July; and its only chances of success lay in prompt and energetic action. Yet at this most critical period four weeks more elapsed ere the Duke entered the French territory at the head of fifty thousand Prussian troops, and in concert with an Austrian corps under General Clerfait. King Frederick William in person accompanied, though he did not command, the army. On the 23rd of August Longwy opened its gates to the Prussians after a slight resistance, and on the 2nd of September Verdun. Had they been pressing forward only a few days sooner, when the French camp was all confusion and uncertainty from the flight of

La Fayette, it is difficult to see what power could have prevented their advance to Paris. But General Dumouriez, who meanwhile had succeeded to the chief command against them, was now straining every nerve to revive the spirits of the soldiers and to defend the passes of the forest of Argonne.

Dumouriez had also summoned to his aid General Kellermann, with two and twenty thousand men—"the army of the Rhine." On the 20th of September Kellermann encountered a great division of the Allies at Valmy; and after a brisk cannonade of several hours remained master of the field. It seemed a slight action, yet it decided this campaign. The doubts of the Duke of Brunswick now returned with double force; cabals of various kinds were busy in his camp, and many thousands of his soldiers who had eagerly devoured the unripe grapes were struck down by a raging dysentery. Under these circumstances the Duke, to the general surprise of Europe, not only determined to retire, but opened a negotiation with the enemy that he might retire unmolested. Before the end of the month this retreat began, and in a few days more the Prussian army, relinquishing Verdun and Longwy, was again beyond the frontiers of France.

It may readily be supposed how much the friends of the French Revolution exulted at this most strange event. Mr. Fox in his familiar letters of that period declares that not even the reverses of his own countrymen in America had pleased him so well. "No!" he exclaims, "no public event, not excepting Saratoga and Yorktown, ever happened that gave me so much delight.

I would not allow myself to believe it for some days, for fear of disappointment."[8]

The other Sovereigns not yet at war with France had recalled their Ministers from Paris on the suspension of the kingly office and imprisonment of the King. It was the natural course to take when the sole Power to which they were accredited had ceased to exist. Amongst others Earl Gower, the English ambassador in France, was summoned home by the English Cabinet. But his letter of recall, which he was directed to show to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, contained a renewed assurance of neutrality in the domestic affairs of France. In the same spirit M. de Chauvelin, the French ambassador in England, was at his request permitted by the English Cabinet to continue to reside in London without official character. And he received a further assurance from Lord Grenville that should he be desirous of making any communications of a pacific tendency, no obstacle of a merely formal nature should be interposed. It is clear that Mr. Pitt at this period was still resolutely bent against any participation in the war.

Early in September were elected the deputies to the newly summoned National Convention. The mode of election was nearly universal suffrage, and the choice in general fell on the most violent and thorough-going men, or on the most timid, which in times of popular intimidation amounts to the same thing. Paris sent,

[8] Letter to his nephew Lord Holland, Oct. 12, 1792. On the other hand it is just to notice that Mr. Fox, in the same correspondence a month before, had spoken with the utmost horror of the assassins of the prisoners—the *Septembriseurs*—at Paris.

amongst others, Robespierre and Danton, the two chiefs of the extreme Republicans; Billaud Varennes, who had just before distinguished himself in promoting the massacre of the prisoners; and the Duke of Orleans, who, renouncing his titles and family name, called himself Philippe Egalité. In other places there were two Englishmen chosen, Thomas Paine and Dr. Priestley, but only the former came to France and took his seat. The Convention met for the first time on the 20th of September, the same day that the armies fought at Valmy. Next morning, by an unanimous vote and without the smallest discussion, they decreed to abolish the institution of Royalty in France.

On the retreat of the Prussians from Champagne, Dumouriez repaired to Paris to concert measures for his favourite object, the invasion of the Netherlands. They were at this time feebly defended by the Duke of Saxe-Teschen at the head of insufficient Austrian forces. Dumouriez having obtained the requisite powers and crossed the frontiers with his army, gave battle to Saxe-Teschen on the 6th of November at Jemmapes. The result was a complete victory on the side of the French. And now appeared the results of the policy of Joseph the Second in demolishing the fortifications. No barrier remained against the invading army. Dumouriez entered Brussels in triumph, and all Belgium to the Meuse was subdued.

In other quarters also the French arms were crowned with unexpected success. Advancing from Alsace, General de Custine took Worms and Mayence, and even pushed forward to Frankfort. Towards the Alps the

King of Sardinia having, with more zeal than prudence, joined the Coalition since the 10th of August, a body of French troops entered Savoy and speedily reduced the province in concert with a Savoyard insurrection. Another body set in movement from the Var took Nice and Villafranca with equal ease.

These successes, so little looked for at a period of so much internal strife, raised to the highest pitch the arrogance of the Convention. As defying public opinion in all other countries, they resolved to bring to a public trial their deposed and imprisoned King. They issued on the 19th of November the famous Decree by which, in the name of the French people, they offered fraternity and assistance to every nation that desired to recover their freedom, or in other words, to cast off the sway of Royalty; and they ordered this Decree to be translated and printed in all languages. By another Decree on the 21st, they proclaimed an accession of territory to themselves. France had been recently divided into eighty-three departments, in the place of its ancient provinces, and Savoy was now declared the eighty-fourth, under the name of the Département du Mont Blanc. It was plain that, like the first followers of Mahomet, they sought to make conquests partly by conversion and partly by the sword.

But further still they showed an utter disregard of the rights of neutral nations. On their conquest of Belgium they sent a peremptory order that their General should obtain freedom of navigation to the sea and even for armed vessels on both the rivers Scheldt and Meuse. Against this order stood the privileges secured to Holland

by treaty, and also our own obligations to aid Holland whenever assailed.

It was in reference to the rights especially of Holland, and only a few days before the famous Decree of the 19th of November, which entirely altered the aspect of affairs, that we find Mr. Pitt write as follows to one of the most respected of his colleagues, the Marquis of Stafford.

"Downing Street, Nov. 13, 1792.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"The strange and unfortunate events which have followed one another so rapidly on the Continent are in many views matter of serious and anxious consideration.

"That which presses the most relates to the situation of Holland, as your Lordship will find from the enclosed despatch from Lord Auckland, and as must indeed be the case in consequence of the events in Flanders. However unfortunate it would be to find this country in any shape committed, it seems absolutely impossible to hesitate as to supporting our ally in case of necessity, and the explicit declaration of our sentiments is the most likely way to prevent the case occurring. We have, therefore, thought it best to send without delay instructions to Lord Auckland to present a memorial to the States, of which I enclose a copy. I likewise enclose a copy of instructions to Sir Morton Eden at Berlin, and those to Vienna are nearly to the same effect. These are necessarily in very general terms, as, in the ignorance of the designs of Austria and Prussia, and in the uncertainty as to what events each day may produce, it seems impossible to decide definitively at present on the line which we ought to pursue, except as far as relates to Holland.

"Perhaps some opening may arise which may enable us to contribute to the termination of the war between different powers in Europe, leaving France (which I believe is the best way) to arrange its own internal affairs as it can. The whole situation, however, becomes so delicate and critical, that I have thought it right to request the presence of all the members of the Cabinet who can, without too much inconvenience, give their attendance. It will certainly be a great satisfaction if your Lordship should be of that number. At all events I wish to apprise you as well as I can of what is passing, and shall be happy to receive your sentiments upon it either personally or by letter.

"I am, with the greatest regard, &c.,

"W. PITT."

It was not merely as allies that we felt at this period the aggressive spirit of France. M. de Chauvelin, and still more his far abler Secretary, M. de Talleyrand, were accused of caballing with the malcontent party in England. But it is most probable that in many cases secret emissaries of the Jacobins acted in their name. Addresses of congratulation on recent events in France, and especially on the "glorious victory of the 10th of August," were voted and sent over to the National Convention by several of the Societies formed in London within the last three years. The tide of seditious publications, which had been checked in the previous spring, now flowed anew. Amongst the rest we may observe a new edition of that eloquent incentive to tyrannicide, the tract entitled "Killing no Murder," which had been written by Colonel Titus, and is said to have disturbed the last days of Oliver Cromwell. It had also been re-

printed by some desperate adherents of the Stuarts in 1743, and it is striking to find that on this one and only point the extremes of two parties diametrically opposed in their tenets—the Jacobites and the Jacobins—agreed.

Still more alarming were the disturbances that now broke forth in several parts of England. Such was the case, for example, at Yarmouth and at Shields. In Sheffield there was appointed a day of rejoicing to celebrate the success of the French arms. An ox was in the first place roasted whole and eaten, after which the numbers assembled walked in procession with the French tri-colors flying, and with a picture at the end of a pole which represented Dundas and Burke stabbing Liberty. An officer quartered at Sheffield wrote as follows to his brother next day:—"They are as resolute and determined a set of villains as I ever saw, and will gain their object if it is to be gained. They have debating societies and regular correspondence with the other towns; they have subscribed to purchase fire-arms, and are endeavouring to corrupt the soldiers." [9]

From Scotland there came no better tidings. There had been riots at Dundee, Perth, and Aberdeen; and in all three places it had been requisite to send for military aid. At Dundee the first occasion or pretext of the tumult had been the high price of meal, but it was not long ere cries of "Liberty and Equality!" arose from every quarter of the mob. Some even called out "No Excise! No King!" and they con-

[9] See the Life of Pitt, by Tomline, vol. iii. p. 458.

cluded with planting a tree of Liberty, according to the pattern of France.[1]

Dundas had himself gone to Scotland at this time, and on his way back received at Northallerton the following letter from Pitt. The original is among the Arniston Papers.

"Downing Street, Tuesday,
"DEAR DUNDAS, Dec. 4, 1792.

"I have received your letter of last Saturday morning, and all those preceding it; and am very glad to think that on the whole you will have left everything in Scotland in a better train than could have been expected. The impression here from calling out the Militia is as favourable as we could wish, and people who a few days ago were inclined to despond begin to tell us that we shall only be attacked for having made so great an exertion when there was so little real danger. I believe myself that the chief danger at home is over for the present, but I am sure there is still mischief enough afloat not to relax any of our preparations, and things abroad still wear such an aspect that nothing but our being ready for war can preserve peace. On all this, however, we shall soon converse at large. The reason of my sending this letter is to ask whether you have or can procure a complete narrative of all that passed relative to the disturbances at Dundee, showing the exact extent of the outrages committed, as I think we have not at present in the Office as particular a statement of that transaction as one should wish. The calling out the Militia was so clearly right and necessary that people will not much be inclined to cavil as to the application of the term

[1] Speech of Dundas, Dec. 13, 1792.

Insurrection, which was the ostensible ground of our taking the measure. I have, however, some reason to suppose that some part of Opposition will try to criticise the measure in that respect; and as we have hitherto looked more to the substance than to the form, I doubt whether we could, from our present materials, give as precise an answer as we should wish to cavils of this nature. The proceedings at Yarmouth and at Shields certainly both amounted to insurrections, but they were not on political questions, and therefore what passed at Dundee furnishes the specific ground which seems best to be relied on. After all there will be no difficulty in avowing that at any rate we thought it necessary to take this measure for the public safety.

"I send this to meet you on the road, because you would have no time to write to Scotland, should it be necessary, and to receive an answer before Parliament meets.

"Yours ever,

"W. PITT."

All this time the English conspirators were, it would seem, supplied with, and instigated by, money from abroad. Shortly afterwards it was boasted by one of the Republican leaders in France, Citizen Brissot (for the title of Monsieur was discarded as savouring of aristocracy), that even before the Declaration of War large sums had been at intervals sent over to England from France. But although large sums may indeed have been abstracted from the French treasury, it seems highly improbable that the same amount ever reached the opposite shores. There was also, on the other hand, some reason to suspect that money

had been transmitted from Ireland to French agents and for French uses.[2]

On the opposite side the loyal majority of Englishmen began in London to make some counter-demonstrations. The person who appears to have taken the lead in this movement was Mr. John Reeves, a barrister, and Law-Clerk in Lord Hawkesbury's Office. Through his means there was summoned by public advertisement a meeting at the Crown and Anchor Tavern on the 29th of November, when it was unanimously agreed to form an association "for the defence of liberty and property against Republicans and Levellers." This was followed by another meeting of bankers, traders, and other inhabitants of London, held at Merchant Taylors' Hall on the 5th of December. There a Declaration expressive of warm attachment to the Constitution was framed and left open for signatures. It was in fact signed by vast numbers of the middle classes, and the example was followed in most of the large commercial towns.

Nor was the Law inactive. The Attorney-General moved a criminal information against Thomas Paine as author of the "Rights of Man," and in due course the trial came on before Lord Kenyon, when, in spite of a long and most able defence from Erskine, the jury without hesitation brought in a verdict of Guilty. Paine had gone to Paris to attend the sittings of the French Convention, and did not present himself to receive the judgment of the Court, but a sentence of outlawry was pronounced against him.

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[2] On this last point see the King's letter to Mr. Pitt, May 1, 1792.

The Government at this critical period was certainly not wanting in most active measures of precaution and defence. Steps were taken to increase our forces both by land and sea. Several regiments were concentrated near London to provide against any sudden rising. The bulwarks of the Tower were repaired. The guard at the Bank was reinforced.

Nor was this all. By advice of Mr. Pitt a Royal Proclamation was issued on the 1st of December, calling out a part of the Militia, and (as the law in that case required) summoning Parliament to meet within fourteen days. On the 13th accordingly the Session was opened by the King in person. His Majesty's speech was unusually long and explicit. He expressed his sincere desire for peace, but also his serious concern at the disposition which had been shown in France to excite disturbances in other countries, and to disregard the rights of neutral nations. And he declared that he had thought it right to take some steps for the augmentation of both his naval and military forces.

During the first days of this early session Pitt was absent from the House on account of his new office as Lord Warden and his consequent re-election; but Dundas supplied his place as leader. It was announced that besides the measures for national defence, the Ministers had prepared an Alien Bill, laying, for the first time, certain restrictions and liabilities upon all foreigners in England. Two other Bills were brought in with special reference to France; the one restraining the export of arms and ammunition, the other prohibiting the export of corn. In all these measures the friends and followers of the

Duke of Portland, comprising the greater part of the Opposition in both Houses, showed a strong disposition to support the policy of the Government. Fox, on the other hand, warmly declared against it. On the very first evening he moved an Amendment to the Address, and had the mortification to find himself in a minority of no more than fifty Members. Nor did any better success attend him when, two days afterwards, he moved to acknowledge the French Republic, and to accredit a Minister at Paris. As Lord Malmesbury in his Journal states it: "The cry against him out of doors was excessive, and his friends were hurt beyond measure: several left London."[3]

In the other House Lord Stanhope, though altogether unconnected with Fox's party, espoused with great ardour the cause of the French Revolution. He had wholly estranged himself from Mr. Pitt, but was still on terms of friendly intercourse with Lord Grenville, the uncle of his wife. To Lord Grenville at this time he wrote as follows:

"MY DEAR LORD, "Mansfield Street, Dec. 19, 1792.

"I have written to Mr. Stone to send you herewith a copy of the Decree of the National Convention, and also of the Questions of the Committee for the Colonies. They explain themselves. Mr. Stone is an Englishman, well acquainted with the Ministers and leading men in France, and whom your Lordship will do well at least to see, as he can convince you of their friendly disposition towards this country. Good God! my dear

[3] Diary, Dec. 15, 1792.

Lord, you have no conception of the misfortunes you may bring upon *England* by going to war with France. For as to *France*, I believe all Europe cannot subdue them, whatever efforts may be made. It will only rouse them more.

"Believe me ever, my dear Lord, &c., &c.,

"STANHOPE."

This letter bears an indorsement in Lord Grenville's hand, "To be circulated"—that is, among the Cabinet Ministers. Thus it must have come before Mr. Pitt. But I know not whether any or what answer it received.

Another letter addressed to Pitt about this time would have excited no small amazement in any English Minister half a century before. An application for pecuniary aid from the Pretender's Queen! Thus writes Lord Camelford:—

"MY DEAR SIR, "Florence, Dec. 14, 1792.

"I write to acquit myself of a commission I have received from the Comtesse Albany, who desires to assure you that the kind part you were so good to take in her business, both when she left England and since, lays her under obligations that she shall never forget.

"After what is past, I conclude it is in vain to hope the subject can be renewed in any shape hereafter. It is impossible for me, however, to be witness to the situation of that unfortunate lady without reflecting upon the effect her present distress must produce upon every feeling mind in Europe. By her flight from France, where, had she remained two days longer, her certain imprisonment had been the consequence, and she would have been included in the general massacre, she has lost every resource from that country. Driven

afterwards from her family at Brussels, from the apprehensions of what has actually taken place immediately after, she has taken refuge here as the only asylum that could afford her any promise of safety; and here she lives upon the *débris* of what she could save out of her fortune at a sequin a day. I need make no comments—your generous mind will supply them. If she had a pension of 1000*l.*, she would be happy. Pardon me, my dear Sir, if I cannot resist the impulse that has made me state this to you, having no means of laying it before the person whose good heart would, I am sure, be not insensible to it, if he could be witness to it as I am. It is a strange world, and the vicissitudes of it are striking in a manner never before experienced.

"Ever most affectionately yours,

"CAMELFORD."

Lord Camelford did not long survive the date of this letter. He died in the January following, and the letter was forwarded by Lord Hervey after his death. It does not appear that any present aid was afforded to the widow of Charles Edward. But when in 1800 Cardinal York, in consequence of the French invasion, had found it requisite to leave Rome, and to forego his ecclesiastical revenues, the King, on the recommendation of Mr. Pitt, granted a yearly pension of 4000*l.* to the last of the Stuarts. The Cardinal died in 1807. Then Lord Hawkesbury wrote to announce that a part of this pension, namely 1600*l.* a-year, would be continued by His Majesty to the Countess of Albany.[4]

[4] See M. de Reumont's very interesting Biography, in German, of the Countess of Albany, vol. i. p. 389, ed. 1860. It appears from this book that so lately as 1823 the Duchess of Devonshire used to address her as *Cara Regina*, or *Cara Sovrana*.

In December, 1792, the negotiations with the Duke of Portland and Lord Loughborough were resumed. The Duke was swayed throughout by most honourable motives, but from his vacillations played a very unsatisfactory part. He was tossed like a tennis ball from side to side; almost quite determined to join the Ministry whenever he met Lord Malmesbury; almost quite determined not whenever he met Mr. Fox. Lord Malmesbury, in his Journal, has described one scene to the life; how on the day after Christmas the Duke had promised to make a speech of adhesion; how he went down accordingly with his diplomatic friend to the House of Lords, and how, at the last moment, he faltered and sat still.

Lord Loughborough, though not quite so disinterested, was much more steady in his view; that view being merely, as I presume to think, a great office for himself. Finding that a more general concert could not at this time be compassed, he agreed to become Lord Chancellor at once, leaving the accession of others to the effects of time. The Great Seal was accordingly placed in his hands before the ensuing month of January had closed.

The maintenance of peace was not yet to be despaired of. M. Chauvelin had remained in London, and desired to present his credentials as Minister of the French Republic; and there also at this juncture came from Paris, though without official character, M. Maret, better known in subsequent years as the Duke de Bassano. But the French Government, flushed with its late victories, was ill-inclined to relinquish its ambitious views on Holland, which we were bound by treaty to

protect. And meanwhile there took place at Paris a transaction which, beyond any other cause, rent France and England asunder. The dethroned King, after being harassed during many days by the forms of a mock trial, under the nickname of Louis Capet, was declared to be guilty, was condemned to death by a narrow majority of the Convention (that majority including his craven kinsman Philippe Egalité), and his head fell beneath the guillotine on the morning of the 21st of January. An uncontrollable thrill of horror ran through the nations of Europe. Mourning was commonly worn in England in grief for this judicial murder. "An event," said Lord Loughborough a few days afterwards in the House of Lords, "which has not only changed the garb of the nation, but seemed to impress every individual in it with sorrow."[5]

In London, on the 24th of January, immediately after the first tidings, there was issued an order of the King in Council commanding M. Chauvelin to depart within eight days from His Majesty's dominions. As it chanced, a positive recall had likewise on the preceding day been despatched to him by his chiefs at Paris. Both parties, indeed, were now equally convinced that a conflict had become not only inevitable, but close impending. On the 1st of February the French Government took the final step by a Declaration of War against England and Holland. A similar Declaration against Spain followed on the 7th of March; and thus, the last hopes of peace departing, did the trumpets once more sound to battle.

[5] Speech of Feb. 1, 1793.

CHAPTER XVII.

1793.

Retrospect of the first part of Pitt's Administration — Controversies on the second part — Pitt's Speech on the Address — His French policy supported by Parliament — Commencement of campaign — Defeat and defection of Dumouriez — Robespierre — Reign of Terror — Rising in La Vendée — Surrender of Condé, Valenciennes, and Mayence — Siege of Toulon — Dispersion and slaughter of the Vendéan army — Conquests out of Europe — Political Trials.

WITH the Declarations of War by France in February, 1793, or with the preparations for that war a few weeks before, the first and the peaceful part of Pitt's administration ends. It was a period of nine years—the most prosperous and happy, perhaps, that England ever yet had known. I have related how the consummate financial skill of the young Prime Minister converted deficiency to surplus, and augmented the revenue while lessening the taxes. I have related how a firm and most resolute tone to foreign powers—as to France in the case of Holland, and to Russia in the case of Ockzakow—was found not inconsistent with the rapid expansion of commerce and the almost unexampled growth of credit at home. And let me add, that the benefit of these measures was by no means limited to the period thus described, since it was mainly the sap and strength imparted by them which enabled the nation to sustain and finally triumph over the perils of the conflict that ensued.

The second part of Pitt's administration, commencing in 1793, was of nearly the same length as the former. "From this time," says Bishop Tomline, "to the end of his life, we shall have to follow him in the wise and vigorous conduct of a war attended with circumstances and difficulties unexampled in the history of the world." Bishop Tomline did not live to fulfil his design, and the sentence from which I have quoted is the last that he ever published. But, as I conceive, he has rightly described the nature of the task before him.

At the time the first part of Pitt's administration was, as I have shown, inveighed against by Fox and Fox's friends on many grounds of censure and with the utmost force of invective. At present, on the contrary, Fox's followers in politics seem rather inclined to represent it as free from blame—nay, even as entitled to praise. They reserve their fire to assail the position of Bishop Tomline as to the "wise and vigorous conduct of the war." Thus it is almost exclusively the second part of Pitt's administration on which the more recent controversies turn. Two accusations of especial weight have been brought against it by Lord Macaulay. His short biography of Pitt, to which I have already more than once referred, seems to me, when taken as a whole, distinguished by candour and judgment as much as by eloquence and genius. But even from such a quarter grave imputations are not to be implicitly received. In the task which I have undertaken they ought to be frankly discussed. Therefore, though with all due deference, with all the respect that I owe to the memory both of a great historian and of a departed

friend, I shall here insert some observations written in his life-time, and designed to meet his own eye in reference to both his heads of charge.

In the first place, then, Pitt is accused of showing an undue severity. He is charged (let me give the very words) "with harsh laws harshly executed, with Alien Bills and Gagging Bills, with cruel punishments inflicted on some political agitators, with unjustifiable prosecutions instituted against others." These acts of the Legislative or of the Executive Powers may perhaps require to be separately judged. They will be seen and they may be estimated one by one in my subsequent pages. I by no means stand up for them all as carried into practical effect throughout the country. I do not conceive the fame of Mr. Pitt involved in every act of every Magistrate or every Judge. I do not even think it bound up with all the judicial decisions of Lord Chancellor Loughborough. In several cases, then, which the adversaries of this Government have held forth and selected out of many, I do not deny, and on the contrary intend to show, that the zeal of some men and the fears of others transported them beyond the bounds of right. But that is not the point which Lord Macaulay puts. He passes sentence on them together and as a whole. Taken together, then, it may be asked—when, even at the outset of the struggle, such scenes occurred as I have commemorated, for example at Dundee—a tree of Liberty planted and a cry of "No King!" raised—when the frenzy of the Jacobins, like some foul infection, spread from shore to shore—when thousands upon

thousands of well-meaning and till then sober-minded men were unhappily misled and caught the fever of the times—when French gold was as lavishly employed to corrupt as were French doctrines to inflame—whether the same mild and gentle measures would still suffice as in mild and gentle times? It is the well-known saying of a Frenchman at that period active on the side of the new system, and zealous to excuse its excesses, that Revolutions are not to be made with Rose-water. This plea will not hold good for deeds of massacre and robbery, but in a more limited and lawful sense it must be acknowledged to have truth on its side. But if this be truth, surely it is full as true that Revolutions are not to be put down with Rose-water. There are times when new and unparalleled dangers are only to be met by rigorous and extraordinary stretches of power. There are times when the State could be saved by no other means.

I may add that the view of the subject which I have just expressed was in thorough accordance with the temper of the times. This, I think, can scarcely in any quarter be denied. The great majority of the people of England in 1793 and 1794 felt everything that they most prized imperilled by the French Revolutionary school, and far from deprecating, they demanded a course of most rigorous repression.

But there is another charge no less heavy which the same critic, speaking of the same period, alleges. Pitt is accused of showing too little vigour. It is said that, "since he did not choose to oppose himself side by side with Fox to the public feeling, he should have

taken the advice of Burke and should have availed himself of that feeling to the full extent. He should have proclaimed a Holy War for religion, morality, property, order, public law, and should have thus opposed to the Jacobins an energy equal to their own." Let it, however, be remembered to what the policy of Burke in its full extent would lead. Look to his "Thoughts on a Regicide Peace." See how we might deduce from them the duty of making no terms with France unless the Bourbons were restored—of shunning as a pestilence such a pacification as we attempted at Lille and actually achieved at Amiens. Surely that is not the course which a philosophic historian of the nineteenth century, writing with a clear view of the succeeding events, is prepared to recommend.

Nor should it be forgotten that he who preaches a crusade stirs up not only the good but also the evil passions of a people. Had Pitt chosen to exchange the part of statesman for that of Peter the Hermit, he might no doubt have aroused in England a frenzy against the Jacobins almost equal to theirs against priests and Kings. But could this object have been effected without numerous outbreaks of that new frenzy —without such conflagrations of chapels and dwelling-houses as the political dissenters had already sustained at Birmingham? Would not, in such a case, the memory of Pitt be deeply tarnished with blood—blood, not shed in foreign warfare, but in strife and seditions at home?

There are still some further questions to be urged.

Are the first and the second of these charges in truth quite consistent with each other? Would it have been possible to "proclaim a Holy War," which Pitt is arraigned for not proclaiming, and at the same time to avoid "the Alien Bills and Gagging Bills" which Pitt is arraigned for having passed?

But there is yet another branch of this second charge. We are told that "the English army under Pitt was the laughing-stock of Europe." We are told that, "great as Pitt's abilities were, his military administration was that of a driveller." We are required to believe that a statesman acknowledged as pre-eminently great in peace, became at once ridiculously little in war. Yet, in truth, History bears no Magician's wand, and displays scarce any of such sudden and surprising changes. No doubt that during Pitt's administration there were many miscarriages by land to set against our victories at sea. The same fate attended all the armies which at that period were arrayed against France. It was no easy matter to prevail over a nation at all times most brave and warlike, and then inflamed to a preternatural strength by its revolutionary ardour. When, therefore, the English army is declared to have been at that period the laughing-stock of Europe, it may be asked what other European army had permanently enjoyed better fortune or was justly entitled to smile at ours?

It is also to be borne in mind that the military failures here laid solely to the charge of Pitt, continued long after Pitt had ceased to be. With the greatest of all, the expedition to Walcheren, he was not at all, except

in kindred, connected. The truth is that our Generals at that period were for the most part anything but men of genius. Lord Grenville, writing to his brother in strict confidence on the 28th of January, 1799, asks: "What officer have we to oppose to our domestic and external enemies? . . . Some old woman in a red riband." The truth is then that these miscarriages in our military enterprises, far from being confined, as Lord Macaulay's statement would imply, to Pitt's administration, went on with few exceptions in regular and mortifying series, till happily for us and for Europe there arose a man as great in the field as was Pitt in the Council—till the valour which had never failed our troops, even in their worst reverses, was led to victory by the surpassing genius of Wellington. If then it can be shown that Pitt as Prime Minister strove with unremitting toil by day and night for the success of that war in which he had reluctantly, but on a high sense of duty, engaged—if in his plans he consulted the most skilful officers in his power—if in his diplomacy he laboured to build up new coalitions when the first had crumbled away—if for that object he poured forth subsidies with a liberal, nay, as his enemies alleged, a lavish hand—if he sought to strike the enemy whenever or wherever any vulnerable point lay bare, on the northern frontier when in concert with the Austrian armies, on the southern coast when Toulon had risen, on the western coast when a civil war broke out in La Vendée—it seems hard that, having striven so far as a civilian could strive for the success of our arms both by land and sea, the reverses on the former should be cast upon

his memory, whilst at the same time he is allowed no merit for our triumphs on the latter. That merit is declared by the same critic to belong to "one of those chiefs of the Whig party, who, in the great schism caused by the French Revolution, had followed Burke." This was Earl Spencer, as First Lord of the Admiralty since the close of 1794. "To him," continues Lord Macaulay, "it was owing that twice in the short space of eleven months we had days of thanksgiving for great victories." There is no doubt that Lord Spencer at the Admiralty was an excellent administrator. There is no doubt that Lord Chatham was far from a good one. Still, however, Lord Macaulay's statement, as I have cited it, does not seem to recognise the fact that the greatest of our naval victories at that period—the battle of the First of June—was fought not with Lord Spencer but with Lord Chatham at the head of the Admiralty Board. But, waiving that point, is this the one weight and one measure? When our armies retreat, the Prime Minister is solely to be blamed! When our fleets prevail, the Prime Minister is to have no share in the praise!

These few remarks, which I make unwillingly, may, however, tend to show that Mr. Pitt in his conduct of the war against Revolutionary France was as far removed from the "driveller" that Lord Macaulay calls him, as from the "demon" whom some French writers have portrayed. But from this more general survey I now resume the progress of my narrative.

On the dismission of M. de Chauvelin, papers were presented to both Houses in the name of the King,

showing the great probability of an impending rupture with France. Addresses in reply to assure His Majesty of their cordial assistance were moved in the Commons by the Prime Minister, and in the Lords by the Foreign Secretary. It was the 1st of February—the same day as it chanced on which at Paris war was actually declared. Mr. Pitt began his speech by an eloquent denunciation of the calamitous event of the 21st, "the foulest and most atrocious deed," he said, "which the history of the world has yet had occasion to attest." And he recited against it some lines of Statius, which the great historian De Thou had formerly applied to another dark scene in his country's annals, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew:—

> "Excidat illa dies ævo, nec postera credant
> Sæcula; nos certè taceamus et obruta multâ
> Nocte tegi nostræ patiamur crimina gentis."[1]

With no less eloquence he went on to contrast the ruinous anarchy of France with our own prosperity and freedom. He compared the situation of England—a comparison which since his time has been frequently repeated—to the situation of the temperate zone on the surface of the globe, "formed by the bounty of Providence for habitation and enjoyment, being equally removed from the Polar frosts on the one hand and the scorching heats of the torrid region on the other. In this country," he added with just pride, "no man in consequence of his riches or rank is so high as to be above

[1] These lines are from the *Sylvarum* of Statius, lib. v. div. 2, verse 88.

the reach of the laws, and no man is so poor or inconsiderable as not to be within their protection."

The course of Mr. Pitt towards Revolutionary France received the cordial support of by far the greater part of the Opposition in both Houses. In the Lords scarcely more than four Peers voted or signed protests against it—the Earls of Lauderdale, Derby, and Stanhope, and the Marquis of Lansdowne. In the Commons, before this Session closed, Mr. Fox brought forward two motions for peace, and on neither occasion could he muster so many as fifty votes.

Thus also a Bill, which Fox with great warmth denounced, providing new restrictions and penalties on any traitorous correspondence with the enemy, was nevertheless carried through Parliament with a high hand. It was introduced on the part of the Government by the Attorney-General. Since the beginning of the year that office was no longer held by Sir Archibald Macdonald. He had been promoted to the Bench and been succeeded by Sir John Scott, while the new Solicitor-General was Sir John Mitford, afterwards Lord Redesdale.

The campaign commenced early on the side of Flanders. Scarce a fortnight from the Declarations of War, Dumouriez crossed the frontier and invaded Holland, but he was soon recalled to the Meuse by the advance of the Prince of Saxe-Coburg at the head of some Austrian forces. On the 18th of March the two armies engaged at Neerwinden, when, in spite of great exertions, Dumouriez found himself defeated. The result of the battle was that the Austrians recovered the whole of

Belgium almost as rapidly as they had lost it. From the Lower Rhine also the French were driven back to Alsace. The city of Mayence, in which they left a considerable garrison, was besieged, and after an obstinate resistance taken by the Prussians.

The mind of Dumouriez was filled with chagrin at his reverse of fortune, which he ascribed wholly to the ruling Jacobins. "See," he cried to all comers, "how these foolish men neglected my requisitions and controlled my plans!" He determined to make a stand against their authority, and to restore the Constitution of 1791 with a Prince of the House of Orleans at its head. His first step was to enter into secret communications with the chiefs of the Austrian army—the Prince of Saxe-Coburg and General Mack. His next was to seize and send over to his new friends as captives Beurnonville, the Minister of War, with four deputies of the Convention who had come to his camp and who summoned him to Paris. But the French troops were now far better inclined to their own Government than they had been some months before. Dumouriez found it impossible to draw the great mass along with him, and thus, with abilities so far superior to La Fayette's, he was reduced to the same poor part that La Fayette had played. On the 5th of April he rode away into the enemy's country attended only by a single regiment and by a few personal friends, among whom was the young Duke de Chartres, in after years King Louis Philippe. Dumouriez was received with great respect by the Austrian chiefs, but refused to take any further part with them, or to serve anywhere unless at the head of a French army.

During the greater part of his remaining life, which extended to 1823, the victor of Jemmapes fixed his residence in England, and received a yearly pension of 1200*l.* from the English Government. Some writers in France, rather than allow any merit to the Duke of Wellington, have been inclined to give Dumouriez the honour of conducting from his English country-house our chief Peninsular battles, as some learned Counsel sitting in his London chambers might direct a trial at Exeter or Carlisle. So that when viewed through these Parisian glasses, our great victories in truth were not won by an English, but by a French commander![2]

The defection of Dumouriez led to the downfall of the less extreme party at Paris, which was known by the name of the Gironde. Every man who desired to stop short of the most furious excesses was hooted at as a friend of the fugitive General, as an adherent of "Pitt and Coburg," for by that strange amalgam was the foreign Coalition expressed. The Jacobins succeeded in vesting all the powers of the State in a small Committee of the Convention called the "Committee of Public Safety," and in that Committee Robespierre had the main ascendant. Robespierre was now in truth the master of France, and his ferocious reign is well described in the expressive phrase which his countrymen have ever since applied to it—the Reign of Terror. His system of government as against his enemies was clear and simple, and invariably the same—the Guillotine.

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[2] "On lui attribue la meilleure partie des succès de Vittoria," &c. See in the Nouvelle Biographie Générale of Didot the article *Dumouriez* by M. Paul de Chamrobert.

No rank, no age, no sex was spared. In October were sent to the scaffold the young and eloquent chiefs of the Gironde, in the same month Marie Antoinette, once Queen of France, in November Philippe Egalité, once Duke of Orleans, who met his doom in utter silence;[3] in November also Madame Roland, who in passing by bowed her head before the statue of Liberty, and spoke these memorable words: "Oh Liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name!"

The Guillotine was by no means the only expedient for clearing the prisons in France. Not, of course, that there was any release or mercy to the prisoners. But in the provinces the executions were marked by agreeable varieties denoting a playful wit. Thus at Nantes, for example, the political prisoners, male and female, being drawn from their cells and pinioned, two and two together, were cast into the river, these executions being known by a jocular byword as the "Marriages of the Loire." By confiscations and heavy fines upon the rich, as well as by large issues of depreciated Assignats, it was sought to supply the failure of regular taxes and the ruin of public credit. The Christian Religion was declared to be abolished with all its rites and ceremonies, and in their place was substituted the worship of the Goddess Reason. To personify this Goddess a courtesan not too much encumbered with attire was conducted in solemn state to the high altar of Notre Dame, there to receive the homage of the crowd. The bust of Marat, one of the vilest of the mob-

[3] See the Journal of Mrs. Dalrymple Elliott, p. 181, ed. 1859.

pamphleteers, who had been stabbed in his bath by Charlotte Corday, an enthusiast on the opposite side, was carried round as another fitting object of devotion. And this among the countrymen of Pascal and Fénélon!

Yet in many places of France and by many persons this abominable Reign of Terror was most bravely opposed. The great commercial cities of Lyons and Marseilles, the important maritime fortress of Toulon, cast off the yoke of the Jacobins, though without proclaiming Royalty, and sooner than submit prepared to stand a siege. Still more important was the rising in La Vendée. There some forty thousand of the peasantry gathered in arms for the defence of their Church and King, and they gained some brilliant successes in their first conflicts with the Republican troops. Their leaders were in part of their own rank, like Stofflet, who had borne a gun as gamekeeper, and Cathelineau, who had driven a team of horses; and in part of nobles from the neighbouring *châteaux*, as Messieurs d'Elbée, de Lescure, and above all Henri de La Roche Jaquelein. But all of whatever rank displayed the most ardent and devoted courage. Once as La Roche Jaquelein led on some of his new levies, equipped with little beyond scythes and staves, he pointed to an advancing regiment of "the Blues," for so they always called the regular troops. "I promised you," he cried, "arms, ammunition, and artillery. Yonder they are—let us rush forward and take them!" And take them they did.

Such was the young hero, let me say in passing, who when struck dead by a musket-ball before he had attained the age of twenty-two, left behind him, even at

that early age, a dear and imperishable memory among his countrymen of La Vendée. "Even now," so wrote in 1816 one of the partakers of his perils, "there is not a peasant whose eye does not light up when he relates how he served under *Monsieur Henri*."[4]

Still, however, in many parts of France, and especially in Paris, which was permitted to guide them all, the frenzy of the multitude kept pace with the frenzy of their rulers. As the deadly axe fell from day to day on hundreds after hundreds of innocent victims, there was no softening of compassion towards them, but only the louder cries against "Pitt and Coburg"—against the tyranny of Kings—the insolence of the Nobles—and the juggler's play of the Priesthood! Against the English Minister especially the violence of popular declamation knew no bounds. Even among the more moderate Girondins we find him designated as "that monster Pitt." But although the democratic rage against him continued in full force during the next few years, it is remarkable that the grounds of accusation were from time to time completely changed. During the Reign of Terror it was said that he had in his pay all the chief Royalists of France, exciting them not only to open resistance as at Lyons and Toulon, but also to such evil deeds as the assassination of Marat. After the Reign of Terror it was said that he had in his pay all the chief Jacobins of France, urging them forward by dint of English guineas, and trusting by their excesses to cast more and

[4] Mémoires de Madame de la Roche Jaquelein, p. 465.

more disgrace on the Revolutionary cause. And so far as we now can gather, these opposite charges were received by the same public with an equal credulity.

It may be asked how with France thus distracted and divided the Coalition against her could fail of rapid and complete success? But the Coalition was by no means so large or so formidable as at first sight it seemed. Russia and Sweden stood aloof in an ambiguous state between peace and war. Spain and Sardinia did no more than nibble at the southern frontiers. Prussia appeared to be fully satisfied with the siege of Mayence, and resolutely bent against any new aggressive operations. The Dutch looked only to the protection of their own territories. And thus the brunt of the war fell mainly on the Austrians and the English.

As regards the latter there were about ten thousand troops ready for the defence of Holland when invaded by Dumouriez. Being now free of that duty, they were designed to take part in the campaign of Flanders, and accordingly they were landed at Ostend. Their commander was Frederick Duke of York, who from early youth had applied himself with zeal to the military service. It was hoped that his position as one of the King's sons would cheer and please the troops, while his want of experience might be supplied by older officers at his side.

The Duke of York having joined the Prince of Coburg, the two Commanders found themselves opposed to General Dampierre as successor of Dumouriez. He had taken post at the camp of Famars in front of Valenciennes, and desired to remain on the defensive

till reinforcements should arrive; but being urged forward by deputies from the Convention, he attacked the Allies on the 1st, and again on the 8th of May. On both occasions his troops were repulsed: on the last he was mortally wounded.

The French army, much weakened, retired shortly afterwards to another position in front of Bouchain, called from some old intrenchments the Camp of Cæsar; and the Allied Chiefs held a Council of War. There General Clerfait and the Duke of York strongly pressed an immediate advance into the heart of France. On the other hand it was contended by the Prince of Coburg and General Mack that the safer and surer plan, and such as was prescribed by "the best writers," would be in the first place to reduce the border fortresses. These counsels of dry routine prevailed. With one body the Prince of Coburg undertook to observe the French in Cæsar's Camp, while another division was to blockade Condé, and another to besiege Valenciennes. The latter and most important operation was entrusted to the personal command of the Duke of York. But Valenciennes, though most warmly attacked, was with equal ardour defended. The French Commander, General Ferrand, sustained forty-one days of bombardment, until the greater part of the town was laid in ashes and nearly half his garrison had perished. He did not surrender until towards the close of July, when his remaining troops were allowed to march out with all the honours of war. Shortly before, the small town of Condé, closely blockaded, had been compelled to yield to famine.

Even after the successful termination of these sieges the Allied Chiefs could not decide on any movement in advance. They did, indeed, by a joint operation drive the French from the Camp of Cæsar, as they had already from the Camp of Famars. But then they once more divided. With the English, the Hanoverians, and some regiments of Austrians, the Duke of York undertook the siege of Dunkirk, while General Clerfait led another body to the siege of Le Quesnoy.

But besides the hesitation of the Allies upon the frontier, there were other points in their conduct most unfavourable to their cause. The city of Mayence had surrendered on nearly the same day as the town of Valenciennes. From Mayence there marched out a garrison of twenty thousand excellent troops; from Valenciennes a garrison of eight thousand. On both the same terms had been imposed—freedom to go home, with an engagement not to serve against the Emperor or his allies for the period of one year. But no thought was taken, no condition made in behalf of those brave men who in La Vendée or along the Rhone had risen against the tyranny of the Convention. Against them, as though unworthy the care of the Allies, the two garrisons were left at full liberty to turn their arms. Barère, as the mouth-piece of the ruling Jacobins, hastened to point out and to gloat over this omission. The garrison of Mayence was despatched by forced marches to La Vendée, and the garrison of Valenciennes to the Rhone—with what fatal effect will presently be shown.

Still worse in its moral influence, if worse be pos-

sible, was another act of the Austrian chiefs. On the surrender of Condé and of Valenciennes they had taken possession of both towns in solemn, nay, ostentatious form, not as places to be held during the war—not in the name of the captive King Louis the Seventeenth, but as conquests of their own, as permanent additions to the Austrian Netherlands. In vain did Monsieur in the name of the French Princes protest against this act; in vain did Dumouriez, then at Brussels, arouse the indignation of the later exiles. It was plain that the early views of moderation had been laid aside by the Austrian Cabinet; that the counsels of Pitt had not prevailed; that the curtailment of the French territory at least, if not the partition of France, was now in view.

Supposing for a moment that the Allies had pursued no such suicidal course—that the spirit of greedy self-interest had been withheld—that the system of old routine in the frontier sieges had been cast aside—what result, it may be asked, would have attended a forward movement to the capital? In all probability it would have been crowned with complete success. With English, Dutch, and Hanoverians, in addition to the Imperial troops, the Prince of Coburg could have mustered full eighty thousand men. The French in the Camp of Cæsar had scarcely more than half as many. First, then, defeating the French army, or leaving behind a large division to keep it in check, the remaining forces might have boldly advanced, and would have found no obstacle of any kind on their road to Paris. Paris itself at their approach would have

probably risen, in part at least, against its tyrants. At all events, it had then no fortified works and no regular troops to defend it. And for the Allies to enter Paris would be to end the Revolution. To put down the bawlers of the Jacobin Club and the pikemen of the Faubourg St. Antoine would be to put down at that time the acknowledged rulers of France.

It must be owned, however, that the project of a rapid advance into the heart of France as urged in 1793 seemed wild and rash, and in fact did startle the common run of politicians as well as the common run of Generals. When in April, 1794, Mr. Jenkinson ventured in the House of Commons to declare his approval of it, the idea was received with derision. Long afterwards, and since by the promotion of his father to an Earldom in 1796 he had become Lord Hawkesbury, the words "Lord Hawkesbury's march to Paris" were the burthen of many a jest or satirical song against him.

It must likewise be owned that the most favourable opportunity to strike this blow, like all favourable opportunities, quickly passed away. The indignation aroused by the conduct of the Allies on the surrender of Mayence and Valenciennes lost them the prospect of French adhesions, and tended in no small degree to recruit the opposite ranks. Moreover as regards the last point we must bear in mind that the effects of the French Revolution had been in part for good. The abolition of grinding taxes like the *Gabelle*, and of arbitrary arrests as by the *Lettres de Cachet*, and the substitution of equality before the law in the place of

seignorial privileges and immunities, had stirred up in many places a powerful enthusiasm, above all with the young and the bold. Under all these circumstances new levies in great numbers flocked to the Tricolor standard, and filled the ranks of the Revolutionary armies. Fired with no common ardour, and never for a moment belying the martial spirit of their race, they seemed careless alike of danger, privation, and fatigue.

The fruits of this new spirit soon appeared. When the Duke of York proceeded with the siege of Dunkirk, he found two brave Generals against him — Hoche within and Houchard without the walls; and he was assailed both by sallies from the garrison and by attacks from the large relieving force. His own army was divided into two corps: the one of observation under the Hanoverian Marshal Freytag and the Hereditary Prince of Orange; the other of siege, which was commanded by himself. But with the latter he could make no real progress for the want of a battering train which he impatiently expected from England. On the 18th of August the Prince of Orange gained an advantage over the French at the village of Lincelles, but on the 8th of September was worsted at the village of Hondschoote. This action and the continued want of heavy cannon compelled the Duke of York to raise the siege.

Nor had the Prince of Coburg any better success. The small place of Le Quesnoy did indeed surrender to General Clerfait, but immediately afterwards the French, having received large accessions of new levies,

compelled both Clerfait and Coburg to raise the siege of Maubeuge and to fall back behind the Sambre. Some smaller operations followed with but slight result. And thus indecisively ended this campaign.

Meanwhile the chiefs of the Convention displayed a terrible energy against the insurgents within the limits of France. Lyons was retaken and laid waste with fire and sword. Its buildings were ordered to be razed to the ground; its very name was declared to be obliterated, and changed to *Commune Affranchie.* Marseilles in like manner was compelled to yield to the Revolutionary troops; and Toulon only for a time escaped the same fate by proclaiming Louis the Seventeenth, and calling in the aid of an English squadron under Admiral Lord Hood.

Lord Hood could land no more than fifteen hundred men as available for the defence of the town. But, besides some small succours from the Sardinian and Neapolitan armies, the Spanish Admiral Langara brought three thousand men from the coast of Catalonia, and General O'Hara two foot regiments from the garrison of Gibraltar. Sir Gilbert Elliot also arrived from England for the civil direction of affairs, being associated in that object with O'Hara and Hood. The three Commissioners lost no time in issuing a joint Declaration containing a solemn promise in His Majesty's name, that on the restoration of monarchy in France, and the conclusion of a treaty of peace, the fortress of Toulon, with all the ships and supplies, should be faithfully restored.

But however inspiriting might be this promise to the

Royalists of Toulon, they found themselves by no means able to maintain their ground. Their ill-assorted allies—English, Sardinians, Neapolitans, and Spaniards —even when added to themselves, were far outnumbered by their Republican besiegers. And although the great importance of assisting them was both felt and acted on by the English Government, their fate came to a decision before fresh succour could arrive. The attacks made upon their posts were frequent and formidable; and the artillery against them was under the direction of a young Corsican officer, whose name, then first rising to distinction, was ere long to resound with surpassing fame throughout the world. This was Napoleon Bonaparte.

General O'Hara, being closely pressed, tried a sudden and vigorous sally, but he was wounded and taken prisoner, while his troops were repulsed. On the 18th of December the besiegers obtained possession of the fort which commanded the inner harbour, and the Allied troops found themselves compelled without delay to relinquish the town and re-embark. By great exertions on the part of the Spanish and English Admirals, several thousands of the Royalists—and the Royalists had flocked to Toulon from all parts of Provence—were put on board, and secured from the vengeance of their countrymen. Some French ships ready for sea sailed forth under Admiral Trogoff, one of their own chiefs; the remainder, with the arsenal and stores, were committed to the flames. It was a night of terrible havoc and affright, and of slaughter also when the infuriated Republicans marched in.

Not less afflicting were the scenes in La Vendée. The ferocious troops from Mayence had been let loose upon the open country, and had treated it much as a tribe of Mohawks might have done. At Chollet they had given battle to the insurgent army, when the latter had been worsted. D'Elbée, Bonchamp, Lescure, nearly all the insurgent chiefs, were mortally wounded. The remainder, drawing along with them a confused multitude of women and children, who would have been slaughtered had they stayed, crossed the Loire and marched, half fugitives and half invaders, through Anjou. There might be eighty thousand in all. Their object was to reach some point upon the northern coast, where they might receive the expected succours from England. Accordingly they repulsed their pursuers at Laval, and pushed onward to the fortified sea-port of Granville, which they attempted to reduce by a *coup de main* on the 14th of November.

In England their interests were not forgotten, as they had been at Mayence and Valenciennes. An expedition for their aid was fitted out under Lord Moira's command. But whether from any delays that might have been avoided, or from the inherent difficulties of the service, that expedition came too late. When Lord Moira at last appeared off the coast of Normandy, he found that the Vendeans had left it ten days before.

Failing in their attempt upon Granville, and suspecting their chiefs of a design to escape by sea, these armed peasants, never at any time very amenable to discipline, insisted with loud cries on marching back to the Loire. Henri de la Roche Jaquelein strove against

them in vain. He boldly marched forward and took the town of Villedieu, but he found no more than a thousand men beside him, and was compelled to rejoin the main body in retreat. Famished and footsore they were overtaken at Le Mans by the main Republican army, including a division from Mayence. An action ensued; the Vendeans were utterly routed, and great numbers of them put to the sword. The remainder continued their dismal flight beyond Nantes to Savenay. There, in a second action, the rout was renewed and the work of slaughter completed. Little mercy was shown even to the women and children; and of the vast multitude which had crossed the Loire a few weeks since, only a few scattered fugitives ever again set foot upon the southern shore.

By sea there was not in the course of this year any general action, but many a single ship of the French Republic after a gallant fight struck its flag to ours. And out of Europe we made several conquests. In India we took Chandernagore and Pondicherry, in North America St. Pierre and Miquelon, and in the West Indies Tobago, while St. Domingo and Martinico were attempted in vain. But these conquests, though important, were easy, and did not suffice to counterbalance the ill-impression which had been produced by the indecisive European campaign.

At home, and as regards the members of the secret societies and their abettors, the years 1793 and 1794 were marked by a vigorous, nay severe exertion of the law. So rife and unrestrained had become the projects of treason, that the strongest measures of repression

seemed to be required by the public safety, as most certainly they were called for by the public voice. The licence of the press, above all, had far outrun all customary bounds. Hence in every part of the island there ensued frequent prosecutions for political offences. Hence throughout the country many persons concerned in the book or newspaper trades were brought to trial, and convicted for either reprinting or selling Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man," and his "Address to the Addressers." Amongst them were Mr. James Ridgway of London, Mr. Daniel Holt of Newark, and Mr. Richard Phillips of Leicester. A Dissenting Minister of Plymouth, Mr. William Winterbotham, was found guilty of some seditious expressions in two sermons which he had preached. Another prosecution was directed against Messrs. Lambert, Perry, and Gray, as printers and proprietors of the Morning Chronicle. The charge against them was for inserting the Address of a political Society at Derby, which heaped opprobrious terms on all the institutions of the country. Sir John Scott, the Attorney-General, exerted himself on the one side, as did Mr. Erskine on the other, and finally, after long deliberation and many doubts on the part of the Jurymen, a verdict of Not Guilty was returned.

In some of these transactions it is hard entirely to vindicate the conduct, or at least the language, of Lord Chancellor Loughborough. He had alleged his horror of the French Revolutionary principles as his only reason for joining the Government in advance of his party friends. To justify his politics he a little strained his law. He rather inclined to fall in, at least as to minor

cases, with any severity to which that horror in the minds of others might give rise. The strongest of all such cases perhaps is one which occurred in Kent. An honest yeoman, most certainly drunk, was pushed aside by a constable as drunk as himself, and ordered to keep the peace in the King's name. The answer was in these words: "D—— you and the King too!" For this foolish expression the Quarter Sessions condemned the poor man to twelve months' imprisonment, and the Chancellor on being appealed to refused to interfere. "To save the country from Revolution"—thus spoke his Lordship—"the authority of all tribunals high and low must be upheld."[5]

But it was in Scotland that we find the most of violence, both in the Revolutionary spirit and in the measures against it; and all the other trials of 1793 are cast into the shade by the superior interest of the cases of Muir and Palmer.

Thomas Muir was a Scottish Advocate, the son of a bookseller at Glasgow. He had taken an active part in politics as a speaker at public meetings, and as a member of the Society called "the Friends of the People." Finding a charge of sedition brought against him, he had retired to France and undergone a sentence of outlawry. But in the course of this summer, coming back by the way of Ireland to his native country, he was discovered and arrested at Port Patrick. Next, he was indicted for having published by distributing several seditious works, particularly those of Thomas

[5] See Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. vi. p. 265.

Paine, and also for seditious words and speeches. In the trial which ensued at Edinburgh he conducted his own defence. Overlooking, since he could not vindicate, some language of a seditious tendency which was certainly brought home to him, he declared that his object had only been to effect a Reform of the House of Commons, and he quoted—as was the usual course of the defendants for sedition at this period—the early speeches of Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Richmond in support of the same cause. On the whole he defended himself with eloquence, skill, and courage, and when he sat down the sympathy of the audience was shown by repeated bursts of cheers.

On the other hand, the Lord Justice Clerk—and here not merely the office which he sullied, but also his name and title should be recorded; it was Robert MacQueen of Braxfield—in summing up the evidence with a strong bias against the prisoner, used some most unjustifiable expressions. He said that the Government of the country was made up of the landed interest, "which alone had a right to be represented. As for the rabble," he continued, "who have nothing but personal property, what hold has the nation of them?" Some months later, Mr. Fox, with his usual force, denounced in the House of Commons this most discreditable Charge.[6]

At Edinburgh, however, the Jury returned a verdict of Guilty, and the Judges concurred in a sentence

[6] Howell's State Trials, vol. xxiii. p. 231, and Debate on Mr. Adam's motion, March 10, 1794.

that Thomas Muir should be transported beyond seas for the term of fourteen years. And here another grave charge arises against Lord Braxfield. It appears from his speech that the cheers at the close of the prisoner's address were admitted, most unjustifiably, as an argument against the prisoner himself. "I must observe" — thus spoke Lord Braxfield — "that the indecent applause which was given Mr. Muir last night convinces me that a spirit of discontent still lurks in the minds of the people, and that it would be dangerous to allow him to remain in this country. This circumstance, I must say, has no little weight with me when considering of the punishment which Mr. Muir deserves."

In fulfilment of this sentence, Mr. Muir, after being confined for some months in the Tolbooth at Edinburgh, was transported to Botany Bay. There he had fresh opportunity to show his courage and skill. It was a matter of extreme difficulty to escape from that settlement, visited at that time by scarce any besides convict and strictly-guarded ships. Mr. Muir, however, found means to embark undiscovered for Nootka Sound, thence travelling along the coast to Panama, and across the Isthmus of Darien, and after a short detention in the island of Cuba, finding in a Spanish frigate a safe conveyance to Europe. But during this last passage he received a wound that was never perfectly cured, and to which was ascribed his death at Paris in the year 1799.[7] Wolfe Tone, who saw him there

[7] Ann. Registers, 1797, p. 14; and 1799, p. 9.

in the preceding years, describes him in far from favourable terms: "Of all the vain, obstinate blockheads that ever I met, I never saw his equal."[8] Since his death, on the contrary, some of his own countrymen in Scotland have been disposed to look on him with great veneration, as "one of the Martyrs."

A much shorter statement will suffice for the case of the Rev. Thomas Fyshe Palmer. He was of an old gentleman's family in Berkshire, but having renounced the tenets of the Church of England, he became a writer and preacher of the Unitarian party, and a resident of Dundee. Having distributed some papers of a seditious character, he was brought to trial in September before the Circuit Court of Justiciary at Perth. His Counsel greatly relied on the objection, that on the record his name was spelt Fische instead of Fyshe, and to an English lawyer of that period the objection would have seemed insuperable. But in Scotland it was with better reason overruled. The main defence of Mr. Palmer was made up of the usual topics—assertions that his objects were limited to Parliamentary Reform, and extracts from the early speeches of Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Richmond. The verdict was "Guilty," and the sentence, as in Mr. Muir's case, was of transportation, but for a lesser period, namely seven years. It is alleged that in this case as in Muir's, there had been stretches of the law on other points besides the sentence—jurymen admitted in spite of just grounds of challenge—

[8] Diary, Feb. 1, 1793.

witnesses unduly heard for the prosecution, or unduly shut out from the defence.

In the same part of the country, and before the close of the same year, there was a further aggravation of the popular violence. Delegates from various parts of Scotland assembled at Edinburgh at the call of the "Friends of the People," and in concert with the London Corresponding Society. At their first meeting one hundred and fifty-three duly qualified members appeared. Subsequently there came to be added a few more. Among them were Maurice Margarot and Joseph Gerrald, who were the Agents of the London Association, and who quickly took the lead in the proceedings of this new body. Among them there was also one person of rank and fortune, Lord Daer, eldest son of the Earl of Selkirk, a young man of ardent temper and extreme opinions. Condorcet, in his Will, dated March 1794, mentions Lord Daer as one of the two persons in Great Britain on whom his infant daughter might he thought, rely.[9] Several of his contemporaries speak of his abilities in very high terms, and he might not improbably have played a considerable part in the politics of this period had he not been snatched away by a lingering illness, when on his voyage to Madeira in the course of the ensuing year. The Delegates at Edinburgh assumed

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[9] "En cas de nécessité elle trouverait de l'appui en Angleterre chez Mylord Stanhope ou Mylord Dear, et en Amérique chez Bache, petit fils de Franklin, ou chez Jefferson." (Œuvres de Condorcet, vol. i. p. 624, ed. 1849.)

the name of Convention, and sought in nearly all respects to ape the Convention at Paris. Thus because the French had proscribed all titles, even that of Monsieur, they gave to every Member's name the prefix of "Citizen." Thus again, because the French had established a new Republican Era, they dated their own reports in the same style, "First Year of the British Convention, One and Indivisible." But there was one difference strongly characteristic of the countrymen of Knox. While the Republicans of Paris in their new Calendar had abolished the observance of Sunday, and instituted in its place a tenth day of rest, the Republicans at Edinburgh adhered to their ancient forms of worship. They would transact no business on "the Sabbath." They began and ended every meeting with prayer. And when a clergyman joined them, and sent in a present of books, they blended his old title with his new one, and returned thanks to him as "the Rev. Citizen Douglas of Dundee."

The Minutes of the Edinburgh Convention have been published, and display a curious mixture of simplicity and shrewdness.[1] Considerable jealousy appears to have been felt by the delegates at any delegation from themselves. "It will be proper," said Lord Daer, "to avoid an aristocratical dependence on Committees." On the other hand, Citizen Gerrald, not perhaps without a side-blow at Lord Daer, warned the

[1] These Minutes were produced as evidence on the trial of William Skirving. See Howell's State Trials, vol. xxiii. p. 391-471.

Convention against "the choice of any other than known and plain men like ourselves; men uncontaminated by the pestilential air of Courts." It had been proposed to hold the next Convention at York, as a central point which might combine delegates from Scotland with delegates from every part of England. But here an important objection was started by Citizen Gerrald:—"I can assure you," he said, "that the city of York is the seat of a proud aristocracy—the seat of an Archbishop!" However, on reflection, Citizen Gerrald thought that this difficulty might be waived. He might perhaps be prevailed on to meet even the Archbishop himself. "I would not object," he added, "to go there, because the Saviour of the world was often found in the company of sinners. . . . Let us then, fellow-citizens, unite heart and hand to bury the hatchet of natural antipathy, which the wicked policy of Courts once instigated us to wield."

Another favourite topic in this Convention was the alleged tyranny of the chiefs in the Highlands. "Let me give an instance," said Citizen Wright. "A Highland gentleman had an avenue about a mile long, into which none of his tenants dared to enter without taking off his bonnet; and if they had occasion to go to the house, though in the midst of a hurricane, they were obliged to walk all the way bare-headed!" Such were the Mother Goose tales that found credit with these foolish men.

The Convention continued its debates for upwards of a month. But early in December these were cut short by the magistrates. The Lord Provost entered the

room with a sufficient force, bid the "Citizen President" leave the Chair, and dissolved the meeting. Skirving, who had acted as Secretary, with Margarot and Gerrald, the delegates from London, were brought to trial. All three were found Guilty, and sentenced to be transported for fourteen years.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1793—1794.

Retirement of Mr. Eliot — Trial of Hamilton Rowan — Public approval of the State Trials and the prosecution of the war — Schemes against the Government — Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act — Energy of the French Republicans — Operations of the Allies — Sanguinary Decree of the Convention regarding prisoners of war — Duke of York's General Order — Corsican revolt — Heroism of Hood and Nelson — Victory of the First of June — Accession to office of the Duke of Portland and his friends — Provision for Mr. Burke — Death of his son — Mr. Windham — Misunderstanding with the Duke of Portland — Close of the Reign of Terror in France — Execution of Robespierre — Recall of the Duke of York.

In June of this year Mr. Pitt was grieved at the retirement of a dear friend and kinsman. A seat at the Board of Treasury was given up by Mr. Eliot. Delicate health, and a more serious temper resulting from his family bereavement, led him to this step. Yet he did not altogether withdraw himself from public life, since he continued in the House of Commons.

So full of anxieties was the whole of this year that Mr. Pitt could not venture to leave London for any long time. Sometimes he had a day, sometimes only a few hours, at Holwood. Thus writes Wilberforce: "June 22. To Holwood with Pitt in his phaeton—early dinner, and back to town." We can imagine the Minister most frequently in Downing Street, as another entry of the same journal describes him, "To town, 14th of September, to see Pitt—a great map spread out before him."

In August, however, Pitt was able to go for a few days to Burton Pynsent, and in September to his new possession as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Walmer Castle. The King had some fears for his Minister thus in the very sight of the French coast. Without Mr. Pitt's knowledge he sent orders to Lord Amherst to stockade the ditch of the castle, and station in it a picket of soldiers.[1]

At that busy period the private letters of Pitt are but brief and few. Here are some to his mother, either in extract or entire:

"Holwood, June 7, 1793.

"I have just received your letter, and must disobey the kind injunction it contains by writing a single line to thank you for it, and to tell you that the gout, after having made a visit in due form, and stayed a reasonable time, is now taking its leave. I was able without any inconvenience to come here yesterday evening, and your letter found me enjoying a fine day from my window, so much as almost to be glad of my present excuse for being out of London. If I was to ascribe entirely to the same circumstance the delay of my visit to Burton, I should think of it very differently. I believe, however, that in fact if I had not been a prisoner to gout, the state of things in Flanders would hardly have left me at liberty at the time I first intended; as we are flattering ourselves that a few days may possibly bring us very favourable news from Valenciennes; and I should hardly be able to absent myself till the consequences are more ascertained."

[1] The King to Mr. Pitt, July 13, 1793.

"Holwood, July 2, 1793.

"I am still kept from week to week in the expectation of some melancholy event either on sea or land, of which I should not like to be out of the way of receiving the earliest news. The surrender of Valenciennes and Lord Howe's sailing, both of which will probably happen very soon, may set me more at liberty.

"In the mean time I have holidays enough for a good deal of country air, and have the advantage of having parted with my gouty shoe, and found the full use of my legs."

"My dear Mother, "Holwood, July 15, 1793.

"I am very sorry that I have had an application some time since about Lampeter, which will perhaps not itself be successful, but being from one of my constituents, would make it impossible for me to intercede in favour of Mrs. Lewis's request. Lord Stanhope's notification of his visit[2] certainly comes at a singular time, but so many miles from the House of Lords, he will be very harmless and well-behaved, and I cannot help rejoicing on account of the companions of his journey. Besides answering these two points, I have another reason for making use of the leisure of Holwood to write to you. A vacancy has just happened in the office of housekeeper to the Excise, which is executed by deputy, and worth above 100*l.*, I believe 150*l.* per annum. This is so much better than that which is now held by poor Mrs. Sparry, that I think the

[2] To Burton Pynsent, on returning with his daughters from a visit to his estate in Devonshire.

offer of an exchange would probably be very agreeable to her, as a mark of attention and remembrance, though in any other view I am afraid the prospect of her enjoying it cannot make it much an object. I have, therefore, in my own mind destined it for her, and I conclude you would wish Mrs. Arden, whom you mentioned some time ago, to succeed to Mrs. Sparry's office at the Treasury. I should add that the last housekeeper of the Excise was a widow of one of the Commissioners, and her predecessor an old Mrs. Cavendish, who was, I believe, a distant connection of the Devonshires. This gives a sort of credit to the office which may make it the more welcome; at the same time it does not make the way of disposing of it at all improper.

"The fall of Condé will, I hope, soon be followed by Valenciennes, but the prospect is not yet certain enough to let me fix my plans positively. I think I may be at liberty in about a fortnight, but I should wish to regulate my motions a little by Eliot's and Lord Stanhope's, though not exactly in the same way by each of them. I have written to Eliot, and take the chance of my letter finding him in Cornwall, to tell him that it is of no consequence whether he comes to town a little sooner or later.

"Your dutiful and affectionate son,

"W. PITT.

"I have been enjoying a great deal of this unusual summer, and should like it still better if it had not burnt all my grass, and parched a good many young trees."

"Downing Street, Aug. 31, 1793.

"After the interval of a week's holidays, and preparing for another, I have not till now found time for

writing, though I have intended it every day. It would now be rather late to tell you that I performed my journey and arrived as I intended; for probably the newspapers will have told that for me already."

"Downing Street, Nov. 11, 1793.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I trust I need not say that my first wish must always be to contribute to your ease and convenience, and I am only sorry you should have given yourself so much trouble, where a single word to convey your wish would have been sufficient. I can furnish without difficulty three hundred pounds, and will immediately desire Mr. Coutts to place that sum to your account. Indeed, I should not feel satisfied with myself in not naming at once a larger sum, if it were not that my accession of income has hitherto found so much employment in the discharge of former arrears as to leave no very large fund which I can with propriety dispose of. This, however, will mend every day; and at all events I trust you will never scruple to tell me when you have the slightest occasion for any aid I can supply.

. . . . . .

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

To the State trials during 1793 as told in my last chapter may be added another at the beginning of 1794—that of Hamilton Rowan. It was brought before the Court of King's Bench at Dublin by Arthur Wolfe, the Irish Attorney-General. Mr. Rowan had acted as secretary of the new political combination first formed in 1791 under the influence of French examples, and calling

itself "The Society of United Irishmen." As secretary Mr. Rowan had signed and issued an address of seditious character to the Volunteers of Dublin, and of this act he now stood accused. His Counsel, John Philpot Curran, conducted his defence with great eloquence and undaunted spirit, thus laying the foundations of his own subsequent renown; but Hamilton Rowan was found Guilty. The sentence passed upon him was, to be imprisoned for the term of two years. Within four months, however, he found means to escape from Newgate Gaol in Dublin, and made his way to France.

Although in a few of these cases an eloquent address, as of Muir or Curran, on the defendant's side might stir the audience to applause, and although undoubtedly some Judges, the Chancellor included, did sometimes degenerate to partisans, it does not appear that the main course of these prosecutions in any degree outran the general temper and opinion of these times. Among the middle and upper classes more especially, as also in the entire rank of yeomen, there was a detestation of the French excesses; and dread might well be felt when they saw such excesses held up for examples. Among those who in England or in Scotland still for safety called themselves Reformers, their open violence was plain to view and their secret conspiracy was feared; and the public voice was loud in calling for activity and firmness, nay, even for rigour, against them. In such extraordinary circumstances can we, it was asked, expect that mere ordinary measures would suffice?

This temper of the public in regard to the State

Trials was further manifested in the deliberations of the Legislature. Parliament met on the 21st of January, and within ten days Lord Stanhope appealed to the Upper House upon the case of Muir. A few weeks later Lord Lauderdale brought forward the cases of Muir and Palmer conjointly, and in the Commons there were no less than three motions on the same subject from Mr. Adam. But they met with no success. In the motion of Lord Stanhope, which was irregular in point of form, the mover stood alone, and Lord Lauderdale did not venture to call for a division. Mr. Adam, though warmly supported by Fox and Sheridan, was as warmly withstood by other members of the old Whig party; and the highest number of votes that he could muster was thirty-two.

Nor had the same politicians any better success in their endeavours to put an end to the war with France. Lord Stanhope brought forward two motions with that view, couched in speeches so extreme as in a great measure to defeat themselves. The same object was zealously pressed by Lord Lansdowne and the Duke of Bedford among the Peers; in the Commons by Fox, Sheridan, and Grey. But they had left to them only a handful of adherents. The minority on Fox's motion was no more than fifty-five.

On the other hand, there was a cheerful acquiescence in all the measures proposed by the Prime Minister for the vigorous prosecution of the war. When he laid upon the Table subsidiary Treaties with several Foreign Powers, they were approved. When he asked a loan of eleven millions, it was voted. When he asked for

some additional duties on various articles, as rum and spirits, bricks and tiles, plate-glass and attorneys, not even the attorneys complained. When, a King's Message being first presented, he called for an augmentation of the land-forces, that augmentation was agreed to.

On all these questions Mr. Pitt could rely on the Duke of Portland's friends as much as on his own. Still, however, the chiefs of the remaining Opposition struck at him boldly whenever they saw, or fancied that they saw, any vulnerable point. Thus Mr. Dundas, as Secretary of State, had sent round in circulars a plan "to provide more completely for the security of the country." He recommended that bodies of volunteers, both infantry and cavalry, should be formed, and that for these objects a public subscription might be raised. Hereupon Mr. Sheridan in the one House, and Lord Lauderdale in the other, brought forward motions declaring that it was a dangerous and unconstitutional measure for the Executive Government to solicit money for public purposes without the consent of Parliament. But with every exertion Mr. Sheridan could muster no more than thirty-four votes, and Lord Lauderdale no more than seven. As zealously, but with equal ill success, was the progress of the Volunteer Corps Bill resisted.

In like manner, when some Hessian troops in British pay were landed in the Isle of Wight, or when a Bill was brought in enabling the Government to enlist some of the French Royalists in the British army, the Opposition raised a loud cry of Constitutional alarm. "I

firmly believe," said Colonel Tarleton — this eager politician afterwards became Sir · Banastre and a General Officer—" that the passing this Bill will destroy the privileges of Magna Charta, undermine the Bill of Rights, and finally annihilate the British Constitution!" [3]

An argument of real weight against the Bill was, however, supplied by Mr. Sheridan. "Suppose," he said, "any of the French emigrants in our service are taken prisoners and are put to death. What then? Are we to avenge their fate by retaliation?"—Here across the House Mr. Burke exclaimed "Yes."—"Good Heavens!" cried Mr. Sheridan, "consider that the lives of millions may depend upon that single word!"

On a subsequent day the same argument was farther pressed by Mr. Fox. "If," he said, "the French were to land in this kingdom, and there chanced to be any body of the people so lost to all sense of duty as to join them, should we pardon those who produced Commissions from the Convention? We should not. Nor would the French in the like case respect Commissions granted by our King. Then if we determined not to retaliate, in what a calamitous situation did we place those whom we employed! And if we did retaliate, good God! in what horrors would Europe be involved!"

Mr. Burke in reply—and this speech deserves the more attention as the last of Burke's great efforts in

[3] Parl. Hist. vol. xxxi. p. 387.

the House of Commons—defended his former cry of "Yes," and boldly avowed that in the case supposed his voice would be for retaliation. "God forbid," he said, "that the authors of murder should not find it recoil on their own heads. But fears are expressed that we may inflame the Jacobins by severity. Inflame a Jacobin! You may as well talk of setting fire to Hell! Impossible!"

It is not easy to see how any Government could have displayed greater energy in all its Parliamentary measures for the effectual prosecution of the war. Nor was there less of vigour for the repression of treasonable practices at home. Early in April Thomas Walker, a merchant of note at Manchester, with six other persons of inferior rank, were brought to trial for conspiracy, at the Lancaster Assizes. But this prosecution most signally failed. The principal witness was Thomas Dunn, a weaver, who was shown to have forsworn himself on several points, and to be wholly undeserving of credit. Mr. Law, as Counsel for the Crown, threw up the case, and the Jury returned an immediate verdict of Not Guilty, while Dunn, being detained and indicted for perjury, was soon afterwards convicted. The sentence passed upon him was, to stand once in the pillory, and be imprisoned for two years in Lancaster Castle.

It is worthy of note that among the records of the first of these Lancashire trials will be found, dated 1793, a letter of reproof and admonition from Mr. William Cartwright, of Shrewsbury, "who," it is added, "is a surgeon and apothecary, and a non-juring Bishop." Here, according to Mr. Hallam, is the latest

trace in our history of these successors to Sancroft and Lloyd.[4]

But this last of the non-jurors had now become a most loyal subject to King George. In his letter he says: "The one family being as good as entirely extinct, and the other having been so long in uninterrupted possession, surely we need not now hesitate which of these God has chosen to reign over us."—Then why not conform?

Of all the schemes against the Government, however, London was the main and directing point. There the two Societies—the "Corresponding," and the Society "for Constitutional Information"—had lately combined their efforts and extended their designs. It was desired to call a Convention of the people to sit in London, and to supersede as far as possible the authority of Parliament. With this view, not merely were the workmen instigated to hold meetings at the chief manufacturing towns, and delegates sent down to attend them—not merely were the most inflammatory topics and the most malignant misrepresentations urged in their harangues—but songs were put in circulation designed for popular impression, and breathing the very spirit of the Regicides.[5] Take, for instance, the song which had for chorus:

"Plant, plant the tree, fair Freedom's tree,
Midst dangers, wounds, and slaughter:
Each patriot's breast its soil shall be,
And tyrants' blood its water."

[4] State Trials, vol. xxiii. p. 1073; Constitutional History, vol. iii. p. 341.

[5] See the evidence adduced on the trial of Thomas Hardy. (State Trials, vol. xxiv. p. 977.)

Such mere moral weapons were not alone relied on. Arms—as muskets and pikes—were also, it appears, in some places collected and kept ready; and a seizure of such was made at this time by the Government at Edinburgh.

But this did not suffice. It was not enough that the leaders in such projects should be stopped short in their course. The Government deemed it further indispensable, as a warning to others, that they should be brought to trial for High Treason. Early in May, therefore, eight members of the two Societies were apprehended and, after an examination before the Privy Council, sent to the Tower. At the same time the books and papers of the two Societies were secured.

The eight persons thus committed for trial were as follow: Thomas Hardy, secretary to the Corresponding Society, and a shoemaker by trade; Daniel Adams, secretary to the Constitutional Society, and lately a clerk in the Auditor's Office; John Horne Tooke, so well known from his former controversies in the days of Junius and during the American War; the Rev. Jeremiah Joyce, private secretary to Lord Stanhope and tutor to his sons. Mr. Joyce is still remembered as the author of the "Scientific Dialogues," in four volumes, which appeared between 1800 and 1802, and which convey a great amount of knowledge in a very agreeable form. There was also John Thelwall, of some note as a political lecturer. The others were John Augustus Bonney, John Richter, and John Lovett.

The books and papers thus seized were announced

in a Message from the King to the House of Commons, and referred by Mr. Pitt to a Committee of Secrecy. That Committee, to consist of twenty-one members, was selected by ballot. Within four-and-twenty hours they presented their first Report, declaring themselves convinced that the papers before them afforded ample proofs of a traitorous conspiracy. "However," they added, "at different periods the term of Parliamentary Reform may have been employed, it is obvious that the present view of these Societies is not intended to be prosecuted by any application to Parliament, but, on the contrary, by an open attempt to supersede the House of Commons."

Fortified by this Report, and, it may be added, by the public feeling out of doors, Mr. Pitt deemed it his imperative duty to bring in, without a moment's delay, a Bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. That Bill received the ready and rapid concurrence of the House of Commons, though resisted with the utmost energy by Fox and Sheridan. On the day when it was pressed forward through its various stages they tried no less than eleven divisions against it, though their highest numbers in any of these were but thirty-nine. In the other House the Bill was opposed only by Lords Stanhope, Lauderdale, and Lansdowne, and six Peers present besides.

Shortly afterwards the Committee of Secrecy presented a second Report, comprising copies of many of the original papers seized. The letters from various parts of the country, as here produced, are a strange amalgam of treasonable schemes with silly gossip.

Thus, on the one hand, from Sheffield:—"Fellow citizens, the barefaced aristocracy of the present administration has made it necessary that we should be prepared to act on the defensive. A plan has been hit upon, and, if encouraged sufficiently, will, no doubt, have the effect of furnishing a quantity of pikes to the patriots. The blades are made of steel, tempered and polished after an approved form, and each, with the hoop, will be charged one shilling." And thus, on the other hand, from Tewkesbury:—"The burning of Thomas Paine's effigy, together with the blessed effects of the present war, has done more good to the cause than the most substantial arguments. 'Tis amazing the increase of friends to Liberty and the spirit of inquiry that is gone abroad. Scarcely an old woman but is talking politics." [6]

Throughout this winter the most strenuous exertions had been made in France for the prosecution of the war. The Committee of Public Safety, with Robespierre for its leader, seemed to imprint its savage energy on everything around it. Above a million of Frenchmen—so, at least, was computed or guessed at—took up arms. Thus every frontier of the new Republic was lined with numerous and ardent levies. The Army of the North, as it was termed, that is, in front of Flanders, was, including the garrisons, of two hundred and fifty thousand men. Its command had been entrusted to General Pichegru, while General Jourdan was at the head of the Army of the Moselle.

[6] See the Parliamentary History, vol. xxxi. pp. 689 and 822.

On the side of the Allies the Duke of York had, in the month of January, returned to London for fresh instructions, accompanied by General Mack, an excellent officer on paper. By Mack there was formed a plan, most ingenious and most impracticable, for the next campaign. The siege of Landrecies was first to be undertaken, and then a combined march to Paris was to be made. Great hopes were, moreover, founded on the arrival of the Emperor at Brussels. It was thought that his presence might serve to restore the loyalty of his ill-affected subjects, and to compose the dissensions of his jarring Generals. But neither of these aims was effectually attained.

In the middle of April the young Emperor reviewed his army in the plains of Cateau, where it is said that no less than one hundred and forty thousand men were mustered before him. But immediately afterwards these troops were parted for active operations. The Prince of Saxe Coburg, as Commander-in-Chief, led the main body to the siege of Landrecies; the Duke of York with one division covered his right flank in the direction of Cambray; while General Clerfait, to protect the frontier, took post on the side of Lille.

While Landrecies was thus invested the Republicans were not at rest. They made several attempts to raise the siege. With great spirit they assailed the lines of the Prince of Coburg, but altogether failed in piercing them. Still more unsuccessful was their onset on the position of the Duke of York at Troisville, when they lost thirty-five pieces of cannon and at least three thousand men, their chief, Chappuis, being himself

among the prisoners. On the other hand, General Clerfait, being attacked by Souham and Moreau, was defeated and driven back with loss to Tournay. Still, however, Landrecies, not being relieved, was compelled to surrender, with its garrison of four thousand men, after ten days of open trenches.

The French were far from dispirited. Confident in their superior generalship and growing numbers, they resumed the offensive and crossed the Sambre. They gained an advantage at Turcoing on the 18th of May, and another on the 22nd at Pont-à-chin. In the former engagement the Duke of York was nearly surrounded, and owed his safety to the fleetness of his horse, a fact which, with a frankness well becoming a brave soldier, was acknowledged by the Duke himself in his despatch.

It was at this period that the French Convention by the instigation of Barère passed a Decree well worthy the Mohawk Indians, from whom indeed the first idea of it may have been derived. It was argued that "the slaves of York and George" ought not if taken in battle to escape with life. It was commanded that henceforth no quarter should be given to any English or Hanoverian soldier. No sooner had this sanguinary Decree reached the English camp than some excellent General Orders upon it were issued by the Duke of York. "His Royal Highness anticipates the indignation and horror which have naturally arisen in the minds of the brave troops whom he addresses. He desires, however, to remind them that mercy to the vanquished is the brightest gem in a soldier's character, and exhorts them not to

suffer their resentment to lead them to any precipitate act of cruelty. . . . The British and Hanoverian armies will not believe that the French nation, even under their present infatuation, can so far forget their character as soldiers as to pay any attention to a Decree as injurious to themselves as it is disgraceful to the persons who passed it." [7]

The generous confidence expressed in this last sentence was most justly founded. It is gratifying to learn that this inhuman Decree caused nearly as much disgust in the French as in the English camp. "Kill our prisoners!" said an honest serjeant to his officer, "no, we will never do that. Send any prisoner we make to the Convention, and let the Deputies shoot him if they will, ay and eat him too, savages as they are." [8] Thus, to the honour of the Republican army, this order was never executed, and on the fall of Robespierre it was one of the first to be rescinded. The whole transaction may serve to show how much thirst of blood there may often be in a civilian's breast, and how much gentleness in a soldier's.

In the middle of June the Emperor set out on his return to Vienna with slight hopes of retaining the dominion of the Netherlands, and leaving his troops outnumbered and disheartened. General Clerfait and the Duke of York were in West Flanders, where they could not prevent Pichegru from reducing Ypres, and the Prince of Coburg was recalled to the Sambre by

[7] These General Orders, which bear date June 7, 1794, are printed at full length in the Annual Register for that year, part ii. p. 168.

[8] Thiers, Hist. Revol. vol. iv. p. 68.

the advance of Jourdan from the Meuse. Finding the French army invest Charleroi before him, Coburg determined to fight for its relief, but the battle which he gave upon the plains of Fleurus on the 26th of June proved adverse to him and decided the campaign. Pichegru and Jourdan advancing in concert entered Brussels, and the recent conquests of the Allies, Landrecies, Condé, Valenciennes, and Le Quesnoy, were rapidly recovered by the French.

In the Mediterranean and in the Channel we had more success. The Corsicans had risen in revolt against the French Republic. They had once more at their head the veteran patriot General Paoli, returned from his exile in London, where during twenty years he had enjoyed the intimate friendship of such men as Johnson, Reynolds, and Burke. On his journey homewards, at the commencement of the French Revolution, he had passed through Paris and been presented by La Fayette to the Constituant Assembly. Both there and in Corsica, averse as he was to civil war, he had shown an honourable willingness to accept the dominion which he found established. But the atrocities of the Reign of Terror stirred up his countrymen and himself to arms. A meeting of deputies under the name of a Consulta was held at Corte, where Paoli was proclaimed General in chief and a military force was provided. Of the principal men in the island, some, like Pozzo di Borgo, took the part of Paoli, while others, like the Bonapartes, adhered to France.

In the first instance the success of the insurgents was complete. They drove the few French troops from all

the open country, and confined them to the three maritime posts of San Fiorenzo, Bastia, and Calvi. And to complete their conquest they solicited aid from England. Accordingly after our evacuation of Toulon, it was to this quarter that the next effort of our forces was directed. Lord Hood with his fleet appeared off the northern coast. Sir Gilbert Elliot, as the King's Commissioner for the Mediterranean, went on shore and held a satisfactory conference with General Paoli. In the result the English ships co-operating with the Corsican levies reduced first San Fiorenzo; next, in May, 1794, the important town of Bastia, the capital of the island; and lastly, after a long resistance, Calvi.

It should not be omitted that in these three sieges much prowess was shown and much distinction acquired by an officer destined to become the greatest of our naval heroes, but as yet plain Captain Nelson of the Agamemnon. His zeal and energy—as also the veteran Lord Hood's—stand forth in striking contrast to the indecision and slackness which at this period had beset too many chiefs of our land service. Thus before the walls of Bastia General Sir David Dundas, who commanded the troops, appeared upon the heights, but, satisfied with having reconnoitred the place, returned to San Fiorenzo. "What the General," said Nelson, "could have seen to make a retreat necessary I cannot conceive. A thousand men would certainly take Bastia; with five hundred and Agamemnon I would attempt it. My seamen," he adds, "are really now what British seamen ought to be—almost invincible. They really mind shot no more than

peas." General Dundas was far from having the same confidence. "After mature consideration," thus he wrote at this time to Lord Hood, "and a personal inspection for several days of all circumstances, local as well as others, I consider the siege of Bastia, with our present means and force, to be a most visionary and rash attempt, such as no officer would be justified in undertaking." Lord Hood replied that he was ready and willing to undertake it at his own risk. He did undertake it accordingly, but neither from Dundas nor from another officer who at this time succeeded to the chief command could he obtain any aid except only some artillerymen. "We are but few," said Nelson, "but of the right sort; our General at San Fiorenzo not giving us one of the five regiments he has there lying idle."

Yet even unassisted see what Hood and Nelson could achieve. "On the 24th of May, at daylight," thus again writes Nelson, "there was exhibited the most glorious sight that an Englishman could experience, and that I believe none but an Englishman could bring about—four thousand five hundred men (the garrison of Bastia) laying down their arms to less than one thousand British solders, who were serving as marines!" All this while General Dundas might be no doubt composing a most able despatch to the Secretary of State proving, by irresistible arguments, and on a full review "of all circumstances, local as well as others," such an exploit to be beyond all bounds of possibility.[9]

[9] See the Life of Nelson, by Southey, p. 71, ed. 1857; and by Pettigrew, vol. i. pp. 50-54.

On the fall of Bastia expression was forthwith given to the common, nay, almost unanimous wish of the insurgents. They desired that the island should henceforth be annexed to the Throne of England, but as another kingdom, and with a free Constitution of its own. A Council was employed in framing the articles of that Constitution with ample powers to a representative assembly, and the sovereignty thus tendered with the title of King was accepted in His Majesty's name by Sir Gilbert Elliot. In his despatch on this occasion Sir Gilbert thus sums up the affair, or rather his own hopes of it: "His Majesty has acquired a Crown—those who bestow it have acquired liberty."[1]

In the British Channel a formidable French armament was cruising. It had left the harbour of Brest in pursuance of orders from Paris, and for the purpose of protecting a large convoy laden chiefly with flour which was expected from America. The armament consisted of twenty-six sail of the line, equipped with great care, and having for its chief Admiral Villaret Joyeuse. But his authority was often overruled by a Commissioner from the terrible Convention—Jean Bon St. André, who, though wholly ignorant of seamanship, and indeed at one time a Calvinist Divine, had come on board and assumed the tone of a great commander. Nor was the Admiral adequately supported by all the captains and crews. The French Revolution had been the means of driving the best sea-officers from the service; for under the influence of the new ideas every attempt at

[1] See this despatch, with some other papers on the same subject, in the Ann. Reg. 1794, pp. 95–111.

maintaining discipline in a ship of war was denounced by Jacobins at the seaports as savouring of aristocracy—as an inroad on the rights of the people. It has been calculated that even before the close of 1791 three-fourths of the officers of the Royal Marine had either retired or been dismissed. Their place was supplied from the merchant service, with a very searching test as to politics, with a very slight test as to science and skill.[2]

The commander of our Channel Fleet was at this time Earl Howe. Like Lord Hood, that veteran chief had now reached the verge of threescore years and ten; but it might be said of him as Nelson at the same period does say of Lord Hood, that, "upwards of seventy, he possesses the mind of forty years of age, and he has not a thought separated from honour and glory." Lord Howe had also under him several gallant admirals, as another Hood, Sir Alexander, afterwards Lord Bridport, and Graves, and Gardner, both subsequently raised to the peerage. In the action which ensued the French were superior to the English by one line-of-battle ship and considerable weight of metal. That action, unlike most others at sea, does not derive its name either from the chiefs in command or from the coast in sight, but is known in history as the battle of the First of June.

Soon after daybreak the English ships bore down together for close action, and the onset was begun by the English Admiral. His object was to repeat the manœuvre of Rodney in 1782, and break the enemy's

[2] See on these points the "Souvenirs d'un Marin, par l'Amiral de La Gravière," part ii., in the Revue des Deux Mondes, Sept. 15, 1858, p. 243.

line. On the French side a heavy fire was opened against the English as soon as they came within range. But Howe in his own ship, the Queen Charlotte, of 100 guns, forbade his men from returning any of the volleys poured upon them until his pilot could place him alongside of the French Admiral's ship, the Montagne, of 120 guns, the largest vessel at that time in the whole French navy. Thus piercing through the French line of battle, and closely followed by five ships of his own fleet, he drew nigh to the Montagne. So terrific was the sight and sound on board the enemy's flag-ship that Jean Bon St. André, who was wholly wanting in the high spirit of his countrymen, ran down for safety to the hold. It is to this that Mr. Canning alludes in his well-known song upon St. André:—

> "Poor John was a gallant captain,
> In battles much delighting:
> He fled full soon
> On the first of June,
> But he bade the rest keep fighting!"[3]

The battle now raged furiously, both parties striving with their customary ardour. But after an hour's conflict the French Admiral gave way, and followed by all his ships still in sufficient order, made sail. One of his seventy-fours, Le Vengeur, went down during the action with many hundred men on board, as also some other nearly disabled ships that might perhaps have been secured; but still five were left as prizes, and brought home in triumph by Howe.

[3] Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin, p. 146, ed. 1813.

This victory was most seasonable in its influence on England. It proved our continued ascendency on our own element, as we love to call it, the sea; and it revived the spirits that were drooping from the adverse or indecisive results of the last Continental campaigns. The joy in London and in some other cities was manifested by a general illumination for three successive nights. The joy at Court was manifested by a visit which the King, the Queen, and some of the Princesses paid to Lord Howe and the fleet at Spithead, when His Majesty presented to each Admiral and Captain a medal struck in commemoration of the day. Lord Howe himself received on that occasion the further gift of a sword richly set in diamonds. Parliament was still sitting when there came the news of this success, and of that at Bastia. Votes of Thanks were most cheerfully passed, and there was a vote also for a monument in Westminster Abbey to Captain Montagu, the only one of Howe's Captains who had fallen.

On the 11th of July the Session closed, and on the same day another event of importance was announced—the long expected accession to office of the Duke of Portland and his friends. This was another token of the general desire for an united and vigorous prosecution of the war. This was another token of the general disapprobation of the doctrines which Mr. Fox had recently professed. The third Secretaryship of State, suppressed at the Peace of 1782, was on this occasion restored. Thus while Lord Grenville continued to be charged with Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Dundas with War and Colonies, the Duke of Portland received the

Seals for the Home Department. Earl Fitzwilliam became Lord President, and Earl Spencer Lord Privy Seal; these vacancies being caused by the death of Earl Camden, and the retirement of the Marquis of Stafford. Mr. Windham became Secretary at War with a seat in the Cabinet. In the first instance he had been designed for Secretary of State, and the negotiations had for a long time continued on that footing. But at the very last the friends of the Duke of Portland grew anxious to give greater prominence to their former Premier; Mr. Pitt acquiesced; and His Grace was prevailed upon to accept the arduous post.

Besides these appointments, two or three peerages, and two or three places of less amount, gratified some less leading members of the same connection. Thus Welbore Ellis became Lord Mendip, and Lord Porchester Earl of Carnarvon. Among those who now became supporters of the Ministry without accepting any promotion for themselves, was a gentleman of most accomplished mind and most amiable manners, Mr. Thomas Grenville, brother of Lord Buckingham and Lord Grenville, who up to this time had detached himself from the politics of his family, and been numbered among the adherents of Mr. Fox. As further and outward tokens to the public of the new alliance, the Duke of Portland was invested with the Garter, and his eldest son, Lord Titchfield, received the Lord-Lieutenancy of Middlesex.

It was moreover intended, and with no more than strict justice, to make a suitable provision both in rank and in fortune for Mr. Burke. Some time since he had

announced his approaching retirement from the House of Commons. He had declared that he only lingered to see concluded the greatest object of his public life—the prosecution of Warren Hastings. Accordingly, his last appearance in the House was on the 20th of June, when, after long debate and two divisions, thanks were returned from the Chair to the Managers of the Impeachment (they standing up severally in their places) for their faithful discharge of the trust reposed in them. Immediately afterwards Burke took the Chiltern Hundreds. Then the Writ for Malton was moved, and in that representation, through the continued friendship of Lord Fitzwilliam, his son was chosen to succeed him.

It was now desired—I cannot say with truth to honour Mr. Burke, but rather to honour the peerage by his accession to its ranks. There was also, as I have heard, the design, as in other cases of rare merit, to annex by an Act of Parliament a yearly income to the title during two or three lives. Already was the title chosen as Lord Beaconsfield. Already was the patent preparing. Just then it pleased Almighty God to strike the old man to the very earth by the untimely death of his beloved son, his only child. Richard Burke expired on the 2nd of August, 1794. There ended Burke's whole share of earthly happiness. There ended all his dreams of earthly grandeur. Thenceforth a Coronet was to him a worthless bauble which he must decline to wear. But of the Ministers he speaks as follows, in one of the last and greatest of his works: "They have administered to me the only consolation I am capable of receiving; which is to know that no individual will suffer by my

thirty years' service to the public."[4] In that long term he had contracted divers debts and obligations which his own scanty means could not discharge. And moreover, how doubly hard under the pressure of sorrow to have to cut down expenses and retrench from personal ease! He therefore gratefully took what was freely and honourably tendered—a signal and suitable token of the Royal bounty. But the course that was designed will best appear from the correspondence that ensued. Here is Pitt's first letter to Burke:—

"Downing Street, August 30, 1794.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have received the King's permission to acquaint you that it is His Majesty's intention to propose to Parliament in the next Session to confer on you an Annuity more proportioned to His Majesty's sense of your public merit than any which His Majesty can at present grant. But being desirous in the interval not to leave you without some, though an inadequate, mark of the sentiments and disposition which His Majesty entertains towards you, he has further directed me to propose an immediate grant out of the Civil List of 1200*l.* a-year (being the largest sum which His Majesty is enabled to fix), either in your own name or that of Mrs. Burke, as may be most agreeable to you. I shall be happy to learn your decision on this subject, that I may have the satisfaction of taking the necessary steps for carrying His Majesty's instructions into immediate execution.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"W. PITT."

[4] First Letter on a Regicide Peace, 1796. (Works, vol. viii. p. 206, ed. 1815.)

Mr. Burke replied in two letters—the first ostensible and intended to be laid before the King, while the second expressed his personal thanks to Mr. Pitt.

"Beaconsfield, August 31, 1794.

"DEAR SIR,

"This morning I received your very obliging letter of the 30th of this month, acquainting me with His Majesty's most gracious dispositions towards the remains of this afflicted family.

"You will be so kind as to lay me, with all possible humility, duty, and gratitude, at His Majesty's feet, and to express my deep and heartfelt sense of His Majesty's bounty and beneficence, and the gracious condescension with which His Majesty has been pleased to distinguish me; at a time too when neither I, nor any person to represent me, can aspire to the honour and happiness of rendering him any service whatsoever.

"I have never presumed to apply for anything. I never could so far flatter myself as to think that anything done by me, in or out of Parliament, could attract the Royal observation. In some instances of my public conduct I might have erred. Few have been so long (and in times and matters so arduous and critical) engaged in affairs, who can be certain that they have never made a mistake. But I am certain that my intentions have been always pure with regard to the Crown and to the country. It is upon these intentions that His Majesty has been pleased to judge of my conduct, and to reward them with his Royal acceptance and Royal munificence. I could wish for ability to demonstrate the sincerity of my humble gratitude by future active service. But I am denied this satisfaction. My time of life, my bodily infirmity, and my broken state of mind, leave me no other capacity than

that of praying, which I do most fervently, for the prosperity and glory of His Majesty's reign, and that he may be made the grand instrument in the hand of Providence for delivering the world from the grand evil of our time, the greatest with which the race of man was ever menaced.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"EDM. BURKE.

"P.S. For obvious reasons, if it is indifferent to His Majesty's service, I should wish the pension on the Civil List to be made for Mrs. Burke's life."

"Beaconsfield, August 31, 1794.

"DEAR SIR,

"I do not know whether in propriety I could make my personal acknowledgments to a subject in a letter in which I was to return my thanks to the King for a favour derived from the Crown. But it would be full as contrary to propriety, and more contrary still to the dictates of my heart, if I were to omit my thanks to you very particularly for the kindness, the generosity, the delicacy with which you have conducted the whole of this business. I am obliged to such an architect as you are for undertaking, not the reparation (that is impossible), but the conservation of a ruin.

"I cannot dissemble that what you have done is not only convenient but necessary to me. Nothing short of what I hear it is your plan to execute can give me such quiet as I am capable of enjoying during the few melancholy years, months, or perhaps weeks that I may have to linger here. I should be sorry to leave just creditors unsatisfied, and just obligations wholly unreturned. I should be more miserable still than I am if

I were obliged to mix very unsuitable solicitudes and very mortifying occupations in my struggle with other less degrading but much sorer griefs. But you have done everything for me which can be done by any human hands. From these additional vexations (which had already begun to beset me) the present plan—that is, the gracious message proposed to Parliament and what the King is by law enabled to grant—will afford me what will be deemed a security for the advance of some of the money which will be necessary for my present repose, as the rest will suffice for my comfortable retreat after the meeting of Parliament shall have enabled you to propose the larger plan for my liberation. If I were to presume to suggest anything, it would be the antedating the grant of the pension on the Civil List, for otherwise the state of the payments there will hardly make the relief so immediate as I am sure you wish it. My mind is much troubled, so that I do not know whether I express myself with any tolerable clearness. But be assured that, express myself how I will, I feel just as I ought to do for your very noble proceeding on this occasion, and that it is impossible for any one to wish more sincerely honour and success to your administration, and everything which can be satisfactory to you as a man or as a statesman.

"I have the honour to be, with sentiments of the most perfect gratitude and regard, &c.,

"EDM. BURKE."

Some further explanations passed on the details of the intended arrangement, the channel of communication being the Rev. Walker King, a personal friend of Burke. In consequence Pitt addressed to Burke a second letter in the following terms:—

"Downing Street, September 18, 1794.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"It was not till yesterday that Mr. King had an opportunity of showing me your letter to him of the 14th. I flatter myself I shall have best met your wishes with respect to the present grant out of the Civil List by directing it to be made out to yourself, for your life and that of Mrs. Burke, to commence from the 5th of January, 1793. With respect to the remaining part of the arrangement, which requires the assistance of Parliament, my idea of it has been exactly what you understood, and it will be a very honourable and gratifying part of my duty to take the first opportunity of conveying the King's recommendation for carrying it into effect.

"Believe me, dear Sir,

"With great regard and esteem, &c.,

"W. PITT."

Burke replied as follows:—

"Beaconsfield, September 19, 1794.

"DEAR SIR,

"The unfortunate inhabitants of this house are much obliged to you for the very kind and consolatory letter which I received from you this morning. You have conceived everything in a very kind and liberal manner, with regard to the lives, to the date given to the pension on the Civil List, and to your resolution to bring the message from His Majesty early in the Session.

"As for us, though we can feel neither this nor anything else with real pleasure, we feel it with very sincere gratitude. If I were to consider myself only, whatever was the most obscure and the least ostentatious would be most suitable to the present temper of my mind,

and what must continue the same to the end of my short existence. Whilst my dear son lived, there were certainly objects which I had at heart, the smallest desire of which, in my present forlorn state, would only argue the most contemptible vanity. As to other things I cannot be equally indifferent, nor indeed ought I.

"My first object is the payment of my debts, that I may stand as clear with individuals as I trust I do with the public. I know this object enters into your plan. I am to say that these debts were stated by my son below their real amount. When I came to examine them with accuracy I found it so. He too was sensible of this. But he was delicate with regard to you and the public; and having a resolute and sanguine mind, he was willing to take his succession a little encumbered, and to trust to good management and good fortune to support those debts, or to clear them off. I hope, however, this affair has not been so much below the mark as to make any serious difficulty in your arrangements.

"As to the provision to be made by Parliament, I wish for no augmentation in this respect. If the whole pension be made up to twenty-five hundred clear, to our personal ease it is sufficient, without obliging us late in life to change its whole scheme, which, whether wise or justifiable or not, is now habitual to us; and, in truth, we are little in a condition to make any new arrangement. Without therefore troubling you further, we leave the whole matter entirely to your generosity, and your liberal sentiments. I am heartily sorry to be thus troublesome.

"I have the honour to be,

"With the most sincere respect and gratitude, &c.,

"EDM. BURKE."

To Mr. Pitt these new allies were of high importance.

They rallied for the time around his standard one, and that the larger, share of the Whig party. They gave him fresh strength in the country to resist the advance of the Republican arms abroad, and of the Republican doctrines at home. They gave him also in some cases the accession of considerable talents. The Duke of Portland indeed, viewed either as a statesman or an orator, was certainly not in the first class. But he was justly respected as a man of probity and honour, and he had considerable weight as once the chosen Minister of the united Whigs. Therefore though the King, referring to the Garter, might at that time write, "I cannot see why on the Duke of Portland's head favours are to be heaped without measure,"[5] yet certainly it was of high importance to connect His Grace with the Government. Lord Spencer was not conspicuous in debate, but, as I have already stated, he had very great ability in administration; and Mr. Windham had already attained a foremost rank in the House of Commons. Born in 1750, of an old family in Norfolk, and Member for Norwich since 1784, he had also filled the office of Secretary for Ireland in the Coalition Government. In his character Windham has been described, and with truth, as the model of a true English gentleman. Fond of field-sports, and of all manly exercises, he applied himself with zeal at his seat of Felbrigg to the county business. But in town he showed other tastes and talents not always combined with these. He delighted in scholar-like studies and in literary friendships, and

[5] To Mr. Pitt, Windsor, July 13, 1794.

attached himself in an especial manner first to Johnson and then to Burke. To all affairs, whether of public or private life, he brought a high, nay chivalrous sense of honour. His oratory was distinguished not only by graces of manner, set off by his fine person and beaming countenance, but by ingenuity in his arguments and fearlessness in his opinions. Sometimes he might be accused of affecting singularity, but never of courting power.

This alliance of statesmen, formed with considerable difficulty, was in peril of disruption almost as soon as it was formed. There was a misunderstanding on the part of the Duke of Portland. When the third Secretaryship of State was renewed, Pitt had resolved to divide as follows the duties and the patronage of late combined:—Dundas was to have the Colonies and the East India Department, with the conduct of the war. The Duke of Portland was to have Great Britain and Ireland, that is above all the care of the internal peace and police of the country. But either Mr. Pitt did not clearly explain this matter to the Duke, or the Duke did not clearly understand his explanation. It appeared at the last moment that His Grace expected to have the whole power and patronage which Dundas had lately possessed. Under these circumstances Dundas, in a generous spirit, desired to give way. But he declared that he should resign the Seals, and relinquish the conduct of the war. Pitt, in great anxiety and distress, wrote to Dundas as follows. The original is now preserved, not at Melville Castle, but at Arniston.

"Downing Street, Wednesday,
"DEAR DUNDAS, July 9 (1794), ¾ past 11.

"The Chancellor has sent me the letter which he had received from you, and I really cannot express to you the uneasiness it has given me. I shall give up all hope of carrying on the business with comfort, and be really completely heart-broken, if you adhere to your resolution. Had I had the smallest idea that it would be the consequence, no consideration would have tempted me to agree to the measure which has led to it; and yet, after all that has now passed, it seems impossible for me to recede. Under these circumstances you must allow me to make it a personal request in the strongest manner I can, that you will consent to continue Secretary of State in the way proposed. On public grounds, and for your own credit, I feel most sincerely convinced that you ought to do so; but I wish to ask it of you as the strongest proof you can give of friendship to myself; and of that you have given me so many proofs already that I do flatter myself you cannot refuse this, when you know how anxiously I have it at heart. At all events, let me beg of you to give me an opportunity of talking it over with you. I dine at the Chancellor's. Possibly you can contrive to come to town to dinner, and return in the evening. If you do, be so good as to call here, and we may go to Bedford Square[6] together.

"Ever yours,
"W. PITT.

"I hope, if possible, to get your answer before I go to St. James's, and to be relieved by it from the anxiety I shall be under in the interval."

[6] The Chancellor's house, 15, Bedford Square.

Here is Dundas's reply:—

"MY DEAR SIR, "Wimbledon, July 9, 1794.

"The letter I have just received from you has given me the most poignant concern. My only consolation is, that upon the perusal of the letter I wrote to you this morning, you must be satisfied that neither the public service nor your own comfort are at all concerned in the matter, whereas my feelings and public estimation would be deeply wounded by the line of conduct you suggest. As for your receding, it is quite out of the question. Indeed, the moment I heard the probability of a misunderstanding, which I first did from Nepean, he can inform you that my resolution was taken to render it impossible that there should be any question about my situation.

"Yours ever,

"HENRY DUNDAS."

Mr. Pitt, however, did not yield the point. Going to St. James's, he induced the King himself to address Mr. Dundas.

The King to Mr. Dundas.

"St. James's, July 9, 1794.

"Mr. Pitt has just informed me of Mr. Secretary Dundas's most handsome conduct on the want of the Duke of Portland's clearly understanding the foot on which he is to hold the Seals of the Home Department. Though I do not quite approve of the West Indies being added to the Home Department, I will reluctantly acquiesce in the arrangement; but I at the same time, in the strongest manner, call on Mr. Secretary Dundas to continue Secretary of State for the War, namely, to keep up the correspondence wherever the war is

carried on. I have desired Mr. Pitt, who will further speak on the subject, to deliver this to Mr. Secretary Dundas. "GEORGE R."

Going himself with this letter to Dundas, whom he found at dinner with his family, Pitt again most earnestly appealed to his friend, and he prevailed. "Here, then, I am still,"—so writes Dundas to his kinsman, Robert Dundas, Lord Advocate,—"I must remain a very responsible Minister with a great deal of trouble, and without power or patronage, all of which I have resigned into the hands of the Duke of Portland."

There were also other friends of Pitt to whom his new alliance gave some concern. "Have you no fears upon the subject?" said the Speaker to him. "Are you not afraid that you might be outvoted in your own Cabinet?" The reply of Mr. Pitt, as long afterwards recorded by Lord Sidmouth, was as follows: "I am under no anxiety on that account. I place much dependence on my new colleagues; and I place still more dependence on myself."[7]

The month of July, 1794, in which the English Government was strengthened, beheld the French subverted. For some time past the authority of Robespierre had been in fact supreme. But several of his own colleagues in the Committee of Public Safety had become his secret enemies. Collot, Billaud Varennes, and Barère were jealous of his power. Many others, both in the Convention and outside it, were weary of

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[7] Life of Lord Sidmouth, by Dean Pellew, vol. i. p. 121.

his cruelties. At last the day of deliverance came. It was long remembered in France as the "Ninth of Thermidor" according to the new Republican calendar, or according to ours the 27th of July. Tallien led the attack on the tyrant. Even the recent abettors of his crimes slunk one by one from his side. With Couthon and St. Just, the two colleagues of the Committee who still adhered to him, Robespierre was outvoted in the hall of the Assembly, and overpowered at the Hôtel de Ville. A pistol which he discharged at his own head failed of its fatal effects. Next day, still half alive, his broken jaw tied up in a crimsoned handkerchief, he was drawn amidst the roar of liberated thousands to the avenging Guillotine.

With this Man of Blood the Reign of Terror fell. The Government which succeeded might not indeed deserve in other countries or at other times to be called either merciful or wise, but it was both in a high degree when compared to the rule of Robespierre. The prison doors were opened. The Guillotine ceased its daily work. The worst of the recent Decrees were annulled. The Jacobins, who more than once rose in arms and fought in the streets of Paris to recover their lost sway, were put down with a strong hand. And thus in some measure, though slowly, the public confidence returned.

But whatever might be the Government of the Republic, there was no change in the martial and enthusiastic spirit of its armies. Towards the Pyrenees one body of French troops invaded Catalonia and another Biscay, putting the Spanish forces to the rout, and pushing forward, the one to Figueras and the other to

Tolosa. Thus ere long the Court of Madrid, completely humbled, was reduced to sue for peace. Towards Italy the Sardinians were driven from the passes of the Alps. In Belgium, Generals Jourdan and Pichegru, already possessed of Brussels and of Ghent, paused only while the strongholds in their rear, as Landrecies and Condé, were besieged and taken. In the beginning of September they again pushed forward, compelling the Duke of York to retire beyond the Meuse, and General Clerfait beyond the Roer.

At this period General Clerfait was in full command of the Austrian army, having replaced the Prince of Coburg, who was held responsible for the failure of the previous spring. But the evils of divided and not very effective leadership were only too apparent. They were strongly felt by Mr. Windham, who had gone to visit the English head-quarters, and by Lord Cornwallis, who had recently returned from India, and who had been requested by Mr. Pitt to confer with the Imperial Ministers at Brussels. From neither were the reports in any degree re-assuring.

Under these unwelcome circumstances a scheme was framed by the English Cabinet that Lord Cornwallis, as enjoying, and justly, a considerable reputation, might be named Commander-in-Chief of all the forces that lately occupied Flanders. The new Lord Privy Seal, who had been sent on a special embassy to Vienna, was instructed to make this proposal to the Austrian Prime Minister. This was no longer Kaunitz, but Thugut. He was born in 1739; the son of a shipper at Linz. The real name was Thu-nig-gut (Do no good), but this,

as of ill omen, had been changed by Maria Theresa to Thu-gut (Do good).[8]

To this scheme, however, two obstacles arose. In the first place, the Duke of York declared that in such a case he must quit his post and return to England, and the King warmly approved the determination of his favourite son.[9] Next, the Court of Vienna showed a strong though not perhaps invincible repugnance to place a foreigner at the head of its armies. But perhaps the best summary of the state of affairs at that juncture is comprised in the two following letters from Mr. Pitt; the earliest in date, with only one exception, that I have found among his papers as addressed by him to Lord Chatham:—

"Downing Street, Monday, Sept. 22, 1794.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I enclose you a letter which was left with me this morning by Prigent, who is just come through Jersey from the army of the Chouans. The letter, I understand, is from Captain D'Auvergne. Prigent has brought with him the Count de Puisy,[1] one of the Royalist Generals, whose arrival is of course to be kept if possible an entire secret. As the Count de Puisy is unwell, I have not yet seen him; but Lord Balcarres' letters speak of him in high terms. If he is to be depended upon, his information will be very valuable.

"Prigent's general accounts are that the Royalists are in great force, and the Republicans in very little.

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[8] See the *Oesterreich* of Dr. E. Vehse, vol. ix. p. 78.

[9] The Duke of York to the King, Sept. 4, and the King to Mr. Pitt, Sept. 9, 1794, both in the Pitt MSS., and the last in my Appendix.

[1] This should be Puisaye.

He is to put the particulars in writing. In the mean time I rather suspect exaggeration in his account, which was clearly the case in that which we had just received when I last wrote. Indeed the bearer of that intelligence turned out to be a person on whom there could be no reliance. When I know the result of the present intelligence more precisely, I will send it you. In the mean time I am not sure whether I am to understand from your answer to my former letter that the throwing in supplies would probably be executed by some of the cruising squadrons without Admiral Vandeput being employed in that service, or whether you meant that a part of any of those squadrons might be put under his direction for that purpose. Possibly the circumstances we may now learn may be material in deciding on that point as well as every other part of the subject.

"Yours affectionately,

"W. PITT.

"The accounts from Flanders continue, as you see, very unfavourable; and though the Duke of York's retreat was, I believe, perfectly necessary, there is more and more reason to fear that his general management is what the army has no confidence in, and while that is the case there is little chance of setting things right."

"Downing Street, Sept. 24, 1794.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"The Count de P.'s information, the detail of which he has promised to give me in writing, seems likely to be very material; but it will relate only to Brittany, and not to Poitou. Supplies for the latter will still, I conceive, require a separate expedition. With

respect to Brittany, he says he can point out practicable places of landing either for troops or stores, both in the neighbourhood of St. Cast and St. Brieux, and will undertake that the Royalists shall bring a considerable force near the coast to receive them. He gives very strong reasons for attempting to land some force, even a few thousand men, before the winter, and with that aid has no doubt of the Royalists maintaining themselves till spring, when we may act on a larger scale. Considerable facility will certainly arise from these operations being so near home, and I think the prospect seems at first view a tempting one, if we can find the force, which, though difficult, is, I trust, not impossible. Windham will probably be back in a few days. It seems clear that if Lord Cornwallis has the chief command, the Duke of York will come away entirely. All the accounts, however, which we have received of the Austrian Cabinet and army since we formed the idea of sending Lord Cornwallis have made us doubt whether, even if we purchase their acquiescence in that arrangement, we shall be sure of any active exertions. Lord Spencer has therefore been instructed, if the Court of Vienna had not accepted the proposal, not to press it further; and in that case we think we must look to more limited exertions on the side of Flanders, and turn our principal efforts to the French coast.

"Yours affectionately,

"W. PITT."

As regarded the accounts from the Continent, nothing, indeed, could be more unpromising than the prospects of this uncoalescing Coalition. Prussia openly withdrew from any active share in the war, and sought to open negotiations for a separate peace. Austria,

despairing of the retention of Flanders, required as it were to be bribed to her own defence. It was only by means of enormous and repeated subsidies from England—one about this time of no less than 6,000,000*l.* —that any Austrian army after the first campaign was sent into the field.

Meantime the French, in two main divisions, were pursuing their successes. On the 2nd of October General Jourdan, giving battle to Clerfait at Ruremonde, obtained a complete victory. The Austrians were driven in disarray across the Rhine, while the French in triumph took possession of Cologne and Bonn. To the left, General Pichegru, passing the frontier of Holland, besieged and reduced the important fortress of Bois le Duc; and the Duke of York, after several checks, found it necessary to fall back behind the Waal. Holland was now in imminent peril. The best chance of saving it was, as Mr. Pitt conceived, to place the military operations under one general direction. With the King's sanction he proposed to the Dutch Government, early in October, to offer to the Duke of Brunswick the joint command both of the King's troops and of theirs. Under him it was understood that the Duke of York was still willing to serve. The Dutch acquiesced, and the offer was made accordingly, but the Duke of Brunswick declined.

Six more weeks passed in Holland—six weeks marked by increasing difficulties from the rank and pretensions of the Duke of York, combined with his youth and inexperience. At this most critical juncture Mr. Pitt determined to risk the displeasure rather than neglect

the service of his Master. He addressed a letter to the King, no copy of which is preserved among his papers, but the drift of which may be discovered from the King's reply.[2] The object was to urge upon His Majesty the recall of his son from the command. The King received this communication with pain, nay even anguish of mind, but did not oppose it. Early in December accordingly His Royal Highness came back to England, leaving the English and Hanoverian troops under the command of the Hanoverian General Walmoden.

In the West Indies the war continued to be waged. An English armament had been sent to this quarter, the ships under Admiral Sir John Jervis, and the troops under General Sir Charles Grey. By their joint exertions Martinico, St. Lucia, and Guadeloupe were successively reduced. But some regiments being then detached for a descent upon St. Domingo, an opening was left to a squadron which had been despatched from France with about fifteen hundred soldiers on board. These were under the direction of Victor Hugues, a delegate of the Convention. On the other hand, the British troops in Guadeloupe were thinned, not merely by the detachment from them, but by the dire effects of the yellow fever. Under such circumstances Victor Hugues succeeded in recovering that island, inflicting dreadful severities on the members of the Royalist party who fell into his hands, or, whenever he failed to seize them, burning and laying waste their estates.

[2] See at the close of this volume the King's letter, bearing da Nov. 24, 1794.

CHAPTER XIX.

1794.

Riots in London — Crimps and Recruits — Prosecutions for High Treason — Trials of Hardy, Horne Tooke, and Thelwall — Discomfiture of the Government — Mr. Pitt's efforts to strengthen his administration — Retrospect of Irish affairs — Interview between Pitt and Grattan — Correspondence of Pitt and Windham — Pitt's "Memorandum" — Retirement of Lord Westmorland and appointment of Lord Fitzwilliam as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland — Meeting of Parliament — King's Speech — Wilberforce's Amendment — Subjugation of Holland by the French — Lord Cornwallis added to the Cabinet.

In London the summer was marked by several riots, caused, if not by the reality, at least by the rumour, of "crimping houses." Dens of this kind, in which men were caught and forcibly enlisted as soldiers, had existed in England since the commencement of the war; as in Holland they existed even in time of peace for the service of the colonies. There the crimps were known by the expressive name of *Seelen-Verkäufer*, the "sellers of souls." There the horrors of the system have been described with terrible force in a well-known work of Nicolai.[1]

In London, as it chanced, a young man named George Howe threw himself from an upper window in a court near Charing Cross and was killed on the spot. It was alleged that this was no other than a

[1] *Sebaldus Nothanker*, vol. iii. p. 42, &c., ed. 1799.

crimping house, and the report was implicitly believed. At the Coroner's Inquest it appeared that this was a house of ill-fame, and had no connexion of any kind with the recruiting service. But meanwhile the mob had taken the law into their own hands. They demolished the inside of this house and damaged several others, and were proceeding to other acts of violence when they were, happily without bloodshed, dispersed by a party of soldiers.

These riots were renewed by another incident of a similar kind. At Banbury, one Edward Barrett was brought up as a duly enlisted recruit. But on being presented he declared that he had been made drunk by two recruiting officers in London, inveigled into a public-house called the White Horse, in Whitcomb Street, compelled to sign an attestation, and robbed of his silver watch and silver shoe-buckles. This complaint being made in due form, the two recruiting serjeants whom it involved were sent in custody to London. There was first an examination in Bow Street, and subsequently a trial at the Old Bailey. Upon the first tidings, however, of this case the mob rose again. They wreaked their vengeance not only on the White Horse in Whitcomb Street, but on other houses kept for the recruiting service in Holborn, Barbican, and Clerkenwell. These disturbances, though stopping short of bloodshed, continued during several days, and had they not been met with firmness, might have led to the same results as in 1780. But on this occasion the great city was effectually protected not merely by regular troops, but by the newly-associated

volunteers—"those Aristocrats," as the Revolutionary party termed them. For at this period, in England as in France, "Aristocrat" was the nickname they commonly gave not only to any men of rank and fortune, but also to any friends of law and order. These on their part retorted with the nickname of "Jacobin."

The reader will not fail to have observed that in Barrett's case as in Howe's, there was, as exerted by the multitude, true "Jedburgh Justice," as it used to be called upon the Borders. First comes the execution —then the charge accurately stated—and then, at last, the evidence! When in due course the case of Barrett was brought on for trial, it then plainly appeared how much the anger of the multitude had been misdirected. It was shown, for example, that at the time when Barrett declared himself to have been robbed of his watch and buckles, he had neither watch nor buckles upon him. At last the Jury, declaring themselves quite satisfied, requested the Judge to spare himself the trouble of summing up the evidence, and returned a verdict of Not Guilty, Barrett being then in his turn sent to prison to be tried for perjury.

The Revolutionary ferment in this country, as too plainly derived from France, was by no means most dangerous when it broke forth in riots and tumults; it was far more to be dreaded when lurking in plots and conspiracies. Against the leaders of these, so far as they could be detected or convicted, the Government had determined to proceed with the utmost rigour by bringing them to trial for High Treason. Two

cases of this kind—those of James Watt and David Downie—came before the High Court at Edinburgh in August and September. Both prisoners belonged to the Society of the Friends of the People, acting in secret concert with the Corresponding and Constitutional Societies in London. Both prisoners, as was shown, had been active in the preparation of pikes and other measures for a combined popular rising. Both were found guilty, but Downie was recommended to mercy, a recommendation which was of course complied with. Watt, on the contrary, was hanged in front of the Tolbooth.

In England the prosecutions for High Treason had begun much earlier, but were clogged by greater delays. Besides the eight persons sent to prison on this charge in May, there were in September five more included in the same indictment. Among them was Thomas Holcroft, who had been a member of the "Constitutional Society," and who, as a dramatic writer, is still remembered.[2]

While the trials were thus delayed, the party in Opposition did its utmost to decry them. All these plots, it was said, were but imaginary — the mere offspring of popular credulity and Ministerial malice. And, as it chanced, there was just before the trial an incident which seemed not unfavourable to these views, and which as such was eagerly improved. Information was brought to the Government that certain

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[2] See on this subject the letter of Holcroft to his daughter, dated Sept. 30, 1794, and inserted in the Memoirs by Hazlitt, p. 161.

persons, obscure members of the Corresponding Society, had formed a project to assassinate the King by discharging at him a poisoned missile through an air-tube. The persons thus accused were taken up and examined before the Privy Council, but no evidence was found sufficient to support so heavy a charge. From the first the story was received with the greatest ridicule. Perhaps it had even been devised with that view. It was called in derision the "Pop-gun Plot," and may be deemed to have had considerable though indirect influence upon the public mind with regard to the now impending State Trials.

Of these trials, the first to come on was that of the shoemaker Thomas Hardy. It began on the 28th of October before a Special Jury. Sir John Scott, as Attorney-General, opened the case. His speech, including the papers read, was of nine hours. It may be doubted—let me say in passing—whether speeches of such vast length are ever of service to their cause. Many years afterwards a gentleman who had served on this jury said to Mr. Adolphus, "Sir, if even the evidence had been much stronger, I should have had great difficulty in convicting men of a crime when it took the Attorney-General nine hours to tell us what it was."[3]

In this long but able speech Sir John Scott declared that he would show the real object of the Corresponding Society, whose penman Hardy had been. That object was no other than to abolish the Kingly

[3] Adolphus's History of England, vol. vi. p. 75, ed. 1843.

office and to set up a National Convention as in France. For his proofs Sir John relied in the first place on the papers which had been seized. These were for the most part of practical business and in guarded terms. But there were also among them some base and infamous jests. There was, above all, a mock playbill, which announced "a new and entertaining farce called La Guillotine, or George's Head in a Basket. *Vive la Liberté! Vive la République!*"

Secondly, Sir John relied on numerous witnesses who had once belonged to the Society or been present at its meetings, and who stated what they had heard and seen. There was John Cammage, for example, who could speak as to the preparation of pikes at Sheffield, and who had been shown the model of another spiked instrument called a "night-cat," intended to be cast into the streets and there to arrest the progress of the cavalry.[4] There was George Sanderson, who answered as follows, in reply to Mr. Law:—"Was any piece of good news or anything they called good news announced at that time by one of the members?—Yes, there was some good news, as they termed it, announced that very night. What was it?—A defeat of part of the British army; I do not recollect what."[5]

Another witness, Edward Gosling, deposed as to the

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[4] See on these "night-cats," similar to the *craw-taes* of Scotland (still, according to Sir Walter Scott, dug up from time to time on the field of Bannockburn), Howell's State Trials, vol. xxiv. pp. 595 and 670.

[5] Ibid. p. 707.

language addressed to him by Baxter, a most active member of this Society. "For my own part," said Baxter, "I do not wish the King or any of his family to lose their lives, but I think they might go to Hanover. As to other persons, it must be expected that some blood will be shed. Some particular persons have offered such insults to the people, that human nature could not overlook them."—"Did he," asked Mr. Garrow, "name any of those persons?—He named several; I cannot recollect all; Mr. Pitt was one, Mr. Dundas another."[6]

All these witnesses, however, Mr. Erskine, as Counsel for the prisoner, cross-examined with his usual skill. Some were involved by him in apparent contradictions; of others he blasted the credit by branding them with the name of spies. In the case of George Sanderson, whose evidence I just now cited, he framed one of his questions thus: "What date have you taken, good Mr. Spy?"—"I do not think," replied the witness, "that on such an occasion being a spy is any disgrace." And here the Lord Chief Justice Eyre interposed: "Mr. Erskine, these observations will be more proper when you come to address the Jury."

It is said that up to this time there had been scarce any instance in England of a trial for High Treason that had not been finished in a single day. But here the hour of midnight came before any great progress had been made with the Crown witnesses. It became necessary to adjourn, and the Court sat day by day

[6] Howell's State Trials, vol. xxiv. p. 717.

from the Tuesday to the Saturday. On Saturday, the 1st of November, at two in the afternoon, Erskine rose for the defence. He spoke for seven hours, until at the last his own voice, his own strength failed him, and leaning for support on the table, he could only whisper to the Jury. But amidst the breathless silence even his faint whispers could be heard. Never was the public expectation, though high, more fully answered. Never did his admirable talents as an advocate shine forth with brighter lustre. It may be said, indeed, that in these State Trials his great forensic fame attained its culminating point. Besides many collateral issues, all of which he carefully wrought out, the main drift of his argument was to show that the law of High Treason, inflicting as it did such tremendous penalties, required to be most strictly and literally construed. It had been framed for the safety of the Royal life and person, not for the defence of the Royal government. To conspire against the King's lawful authority—supposing for a moment such a conspiracy proved—was a crime of great magnitude which the law was open to punish, but it was not the crime alleged in the indictment—it was not High Treason as defined by the Act of Edward the Third.

On the Monday and the ensuing days the trial was resumed. The Duke of Richmond was summoned as a witness to admit the authenticity of his letter to Colonel Sharman in 1783, from which strong expressions urging a Reform of Parliament had been often and triumphantly quoted in the Corresponding and Constitutional Societies. Lord Lauderdale, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Philip

Francis, and some others bore witness to the peaceable conduct of Hardy and his friends so far as they had observed them. A second speech in behalf of the prisoner was made by his second Counsel, Mr. Gibbs, afterwards Sir Vicary; and the Solicitor-General, Sir John Mitford, in an address of ten hours replied on the part of the Crown. The Lord Chief Justice summed up the case with strict impartiality, and then on the eighth day of the trial the Jury, after retiring for three hours, brought in a verdict of Not Guilty.

It has been usual in State Prosecutions, when several persons have been sent to prison on the same charge, and when the trial of the first has resulted in his acquittal, to consider that decision as involving the fate of the next. But at this most critical period the magnitude of the interests at stake led the Government to a different course. It was determined to proceed with the trial of John Horne Tooke on the same charge, and nearly the same evidence.

The second trial accordingly commenced. Erskine was again the Counsel for the prisoner, but the prisoner here took an active part in his own defence. With great delight did the old opponent of Junius and of Thurlow renew his intellectual wars. He showed himself as ever, ready, quick-witted, unabashed. Whether in the cross-examination of witnesses or in repartees against the Court, he indulged in many humorous sallies which the authority of the Judges could not check, and which were rewarded by the laughter of the audience. Erskine, however, made as before an earnest and impressive speech for the defence. Then came a

whole host of witnesses, mustered perhaps for show rather than for use. Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Richmond were summoned to state the part they had formerly taken in meetings and associations for the reform of Parliament. Earl Stanhope and the Rev. Christopher Wyvill gave testimony to the same transactions from a different point of view. Major Cartwright spoke of the foundation and first steps of the Constitutional Society. Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Philip Francis deposed that they had known Mr. Tooke for many years, and had never found his opinions upon politics disloyal, nor even extreme. He was wont, it seems, to excuse himself for acting with men of much more vehement views by an ingenious though inconclusive illustration, which, since he first devised it, has grown into common use. "If," said Mr. Tooke, "I and several men are in the Windsor stage-coach, we travel together as long as it may suit us. When I find myself at Hounslow I get out; they who want to go farther may go to Windsor or where they like; but when I get to Hounslow, there I get out; no farther will I go, by ——;" and here the former clergyman uttered an oath![7]

In this case the Jury, having retired for only eight minutes, came back with a verdict of Not Guilty. Most of the remaining prisoners were now discharged without any evidence being offered against them. But the Crown Lawyers resolved to proceed with a third trial, that of John Thelwall, who had taken a much more active part in the Societies than either Hardy or Horne

[7] See the evidence of Major Cartwright (State Trials, vol. xxv. p. 330).

Tooke. He was vain of his reputation as a lecturer, and it is said that he proved a very troublesome client. At one time he was so much dissatisfied that he wrote on a piece of paper which he threw over to Erskine, "I'll be hanged if I don't plead my own cause;" upon which his Counsel returned for answer, "You'll be hanged if you do!" The result of the Trial, however, was the same. Again was Erskine the chief Counsel, and again did the Jury acquit.

Thus ended these Crown prosecutions. Through the whole course of them the feeling of the multitude ran strongly in favour of the accused. On the last night of the trials there were bonfires and blazing torches through the streets, while the horses of Erskine being taken from his chariot, he was drawn home amidst the loudest acclamations to his house in Serjeants' Inn. There, with Gibbs by his side, he indulged in the pleasure of one more parting speech from the windows. When in after years he was wont to boast of this ovation, some of his friends sought to mortify him by asserting—perhaps untruly—that the patriots who took the horses from his carriage had forgotten to return them.

The result of these trials was of course a great triumph to the Opposition and a signal discomfiture to the Government. Judging from their result, most of the later writers have arraigned their policy. Yet it may be doubted whether such language and such acts as were proved against members of both the Societies could under any Government have been left unnoticed. It may be doubted whether even the prosecution of

them, ending as it did in failure, was not better for the State than mere silence or neglect would have been. The loyal at heart, some of whom were misled and deceived, had now clear evidence laid before them of the true intent and meaning of one at least of these Societies. The Revolutionary leaders might exult that they had, according to the decision of a Jury, kept within the law, but they must have felt that there were some further limits which they would not be allowed to overstep without imminent peril to themselves. And thus it may perhaps be said of the whole result, that though the traitors were unpunished, the treason was prevented.

Mr. Pitt at all events allowed no signs of disappointment or vexation to escape him. He earnestly applied himself on the return of Lord Spencer from Vienna to give new strength to his administration. His brother, placed in 1788 at the head of the naval service, had certainly in no small degree disappointed the public hopes. But he was personally a favourite with the King. Indeed on several points of politics his opinions approached much nearer to those of George the Third than to those of Mr. Pitt. Thus, for example, Lord Chatham was no friend either to the Abolition of the Slave Trade or to the enfranchisement of the Roman Catholics.

In the autumn of 1794, however, a new arrangement was effected. Lord Chatham was transferred to the easy post of Privy Seal, while the direction of the Admiralty was entrusted to Earl Spencer.

Another change of no less importance had been for some weeks in contemplation—a change in the Lord-

Lieutenancy of Ireland. But as it proceeded this design was fraught with most serious difficulties, and almost a disruption of the new political alliance.

Here, however, some retrospect of Irish affairs will be required.

Ever since the advance of the French Revolution, Ireland had been one of the many sources of anxiety to the English Government. I have already had occasion to show in the trial of Hamilton Rowan how rife the secret societies had grown. But besides these the whole body of Roman Catholics, many of them most loyal subjects, deemed not unjustly the moment favourable for urging their pretensions. They had for their principal agent Mr. Theobald Wolfe Tone, and for their spokesman in the Irish House of Commons Sir Hercules Langrishe. From England they received all the aid that the genius and authority of Burke could give. In January, 1792, he published his celebrated letter to Sir Hercules, pointing out the impolicy of the continued restrictions on the Irish Roman Catholic body. At the same time he sent over his son, Richard Burke, as Secretary to their Committee in Dublin. Great ability was shown by the father, and great zeal by the son.

Thus supported, Sir Hercules Langrishe, even before the same month of January, 1792, had closed, brought in a Bill to remove some, the more prominent, grievances of his Roman Catholic fellow-subjects. He proposed that marriages between Protestants and Papists might be solemnized by Protestant clergymen, and should no longer incapacitate the husband from voting at elections. He proposed that attorneys might, if they

pleased, take Roman Catholics for clerks—that schools might be opened without licence from the Ordinary—and that other such barbarous restraints upon education should cease. At the same time he left untouched the higher question of the Roman Catholic franchise.

The justice of the case was clear. Clearer still, if possible, was the pressure of the times. The motion of Sir Hercules was seconded by the Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Hobart; and in spite of some High Protestant murmurs, the Bill passed both Houses with ease. In this result we may readily trace the resolute will of the Prime Minister of England. To the mind of Pitt, indeed, the whole system of penal laws was utterly abhorrent. He had reflected much on the position of the sister island, and desired to see both islands closely bound together on the footing of equal laws and equal rights. It is not too much to say of him, as Lord Macaulay has not forborne to say, even at the risk of some implied reflection upon Fox, that "Pitt was the first English Minister who formed great designs for the benefit of Ireland."

With these convictions, and overruling all whispers to the contrary, Mr. Pitt urged forward the far from willing Government of Ireland. The Earl of Westmorland, at that time Lord Lieutenant, was, as through life, an opponent of the Catholic claims, and leaned for support mainly on the High Protestant families. Yet, under the influence of the master-spirit in Downing Street, the Lord Lieutenant opened the Session of 1793 with a speech expressive of the King's desire for "a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of

His Majesty's subjects;" and he added:—"With these views His Majesty trusts that the situation of his Catholic subjects will engage your serious attention." It is worthy of note that the Address of the House of Commons in answer to this speech was seconded by Mr. Wesley, who was afterwards Sir Arthur Wellesley, and at a later period the great Duke of Wellington.

In pursuance of the intentions thus shadowed forth, Mr. Hobart, on the 4th of February, 1793, moved to bring in a Bill for the further relief of the Roman Catholics. Sir Hercules Langrishe, in seconding the motion, used some language worthy the correspondent of Burke, and almost worthy of Burke himself. "Give them the pride of privilege," he said, "and you will give them the principle of attachment; admit them within the walls of the Constitution, and they will defend them."

The Bill of Mr. Hobart was of a large and comprehensive kind. It repealed all the penalties and disabilities affecting the education of children, or the succession of estates. It admitted the Roman Catholics to vote at elections, taking only the oaths of allegiance and abjuration. It enabled them to hold civil or military offices, with the exception of a certain number that were specified in the Act. That list of exceptions was still too great, comprising as it did, for example, the offices of chief or puisne Judge and of Lord Lieutenant of counties. Still, as compared with the previous system, the progress was immense.

So great, indeed, was this improvement, that it could not pass into law without considerable opposition. Dr. Patrick Duigenan, Professor of Law in the University

of Dublin, and a man of considerable learning, exerted himself against it vigorously, but in vain. None perhaps, were less well pleased with it than some members of the Government itself, and especially the Chancellor, Lord Fitzgibbon, a man of powerful intellect, who had made many friends in his own, and many enemies in the opposite ranks. As, however, Lord Fitzgibbon had no intention of resigning the Great Seal, he could only, for the present, mutter his displeasure and alarm.

In spite of these concessions—or rather, as Dr. Duigenan would have said, on account of them—Ireland was far from tranquil. There, as in England, the leaven of the French Revolution was at work. Even the Committee for the Roman Catholic claims which sat in Dublin, intent upon a common object, did not remain united. Richard Burke resigned his office of secretary, and returned to England in disgust. Even before the Bill of Sir Hercules Langrishe, sixty-four of the most respectable members, including Lords Fingal and Kenmare, alarmed at the violence around them, withdrew from the Committee. Other members, among whom the Hon. Simon Butler and Mr. Wolfe Tone were conspicuous, with no more reserve than their own safety demanded, appear to have aimed at the establishment of a Republic on the model and by the aid of France.

Besides this schism of the Roman Catholic body, there were many other sections in Ireland, some within and some without the law. There was the party of the Whig Club in Constitutional opposition to the Ministry,

and having for its leaders the Duke of Leinster, the Earl of Charlemont, and Mr. Grattan. There was the faction of the "United Irishmen," which sought to blend the Roman Catholics with the Protestant Dissenters, and to make of the whole an engine against England. At Dublin there was an active band of agitators, at its head Mr. Hamilton Rowan and Mr. Napper Tandy, seeking to wrest the city into their own control, and with that view attempting the formation, on the French plan, of a National Guard. At Belfast there were gatherings from every part of Ulster to celebrate the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille. At Dungannon delegates from the province came together and concerted measures for a National Convention to meet in the following September at Athlone.

All this time, in many parts of the open country, gangs of depredators prowled. These were formed from the lowest class of the Roman Catholics, complaining of various grievances, as of hearth-money, county-cesses, and tithes; and known by divers names, especially "Peep of Day Boys" and "Defenders." The latter, as their name implies, claimed to act only for their own protection, and on this plea, assembling at night and marching in small bodies, they broke into the houses of Protestants and took their arms.

To these causes of distraction in the sister island we ought, in fairness, to add the unsoundness of some parts of the system which England was called on to defend. It was more easy to abolish the penal laws than to root out the feelings and tendencies which they had produced in both the subject and the ruling

classes. There were defects and abuses, many and grievous, in every department of the State, such as could only be eradicated in the course of years. Take, for instance, the case of the Established Church. There the spirit was as different as possible from that of the present time. The Duke of Norfolk himself, a convert, though certainly not a keen one, to the Protestant faith, declared in the House of Lords that in many districts of the south or west of Ireland the Clergy, far from seeking to form a congregation, rejoiced in their exemption from any. It was, said the Duke, a common remark amongst them, "You have got a good living, for there is no Church in your parish!" [8]

Under all these difficulties the ruling men in Ireland, as instructed from Downing Street, sought to blend conciliation with firmness. In the same Session of 1793, in which they carried the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, they passed an Act to prevent the importation of arms or military stores, and another Act to prohibit the appointment of delegates to unlawful assemblies, which was levelled against the intended Convention at Athlone. Early in 1794, as I have already shown, Mr. Hamilton Rowan was indicted for a seditious libel and found Guilty. In April, the same year, the Rev. William Jackson, who was acting as an emissary of France, was arrested on a charge of High Treason, and, pending his trial, was detained many months a close prisoner in Newgate.

Meanwhile, through the country districts the conduct

[8] Speech in the House of Lords, May 8, 1795.

of the "Defenders" grew more and more outrageous, and less and less in accordance with their name. In the county of Longford, and some others, the gentlemen and freeholders found it necessary to combine and protect themselves; and they obtained leave to levy a sum of money by subscription, in order to raise and to maintain a troop of horse.

In this anxious state of Ireland it seemed to Mr. Pitt that while avoiding any abrupt changes, great advantage to that country might be derived from the accession to office of the Whig chiefs in the summer of 1794. Such an accession led almost as of course to a concert of measures with Mr. Grattan and his friends. Grattan had unhappily pledged himself not under any circumstances to accept of office, but there might be a new Government of Ireland formed with his approval and receiving his support. With this view it was contemplated to recall the Earl of Westmorland, if some other office could be found for him in England, and to send in his place the newly-made President of the Council, Earl Fitzwilliam. This was a nobleman of excellent character and upright intentions, but whose abilities were estimated far too highly by his friends. It will appear from a Memorandum which I shall presently insert, that in appointing him to Ireland, Mr. Pitt consulted the opinions of others much rather than his own. There was also an idea in some quarters that the son of Burke might go out as Secretary, but the untimely death of that young man in August, 1794, threw the appointment into the hands of Lord Milton, eldest son of the Earl of Dorchester. There was a further idea that Mr. George Pon-

sonby, as a chief of the Irish Whigs, might, in the event of a vacancy, become Attorney-General of Ireland. In any such case, the Duke of Portland as Home Secretary would be the Minister in direct communication with his especial friends.

In the month of October, while these arrangements were pending, Mr. Grattan came to London. He met Mr. Pitt for the first time at a dinner-party given by the Duke of Portland. According to Grattan's report, "Mr. Pitt sat by Sir John Parnell, talked a good deal to him, and seemed to like him much; but the Ponsonbys and the Grenvilles were cold and distant, and looked as if they would cut each other's throats." There is one remark of Mr. Pitt here recorded which tends to prove that although he desired to enfranchise the Roman Catholics of Ireland, he was not quite at ease as to their future conduct. Sir John Parnell was talking of the Irish Catholics, and rejoicing at their union with the Protestants, when Mr. Pitt said, "Very true, Sir; but the question is, whose will they be?"[9]

It was soon found, however, that Mr. Grattan, and through him the Whig chiefs, required large concessions. They wished to recall Lord Westmorland at once, whether or not any place could be found for him at home. They wished to remove the Chancellor, Lord Fitzgibbon. They made a set at some other steady supporters of the Government. To these terms Pitt felt that he could not in honour or in justice yield. We find him write as follows to one of his most trusted friends:—

[9] Life and Times of Grattan, by his son Henry, vol. iv. p. 175.

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Dundas.

"Downing Street, Tuesday night,
"DEAR DUNDAS, (Oct. 14), 1794.

. . . . . .

"Nearer home than Holland everything looks ill. I enclose you a letter which I had from Windham to-day. His letter to Lord Fitzwilliam contained everything that I could have desired him to write; but I have seen him since, and I do not see that any progress is made towards settling the business on terms in which I ought to acquiesce.

"I am fully determined that I will not give way either to Lord Westmorland's recall without a proper situation for him here, or to Lord Fitzgibbon's removal on any terms. But though I cannot determine otherwise, it is dreadful that anything like personal considerations (though in fact they are not all so) should seem to mix at such a crisis as this.

"Yours ever,
"W. P."

Lord Grenville in this transaction showed very great generosity and public spirit. He was then at his newly acquired seat of Dropmore—a domain which in after years was so highly embellished by his taste. Here is a letter sent from thence which Pitt received on the morning of the very day that he wrote, as we have just seen, to Dundas. It will be noticed that in one passage Lord Grenville refers to a rich office for life—as Auditor of the Exchequer—which Mr. Pitt had shortly before bestowed upon him.

"MY DEAR PITT, "Dropmore, Oct. 13, 1794.

"In ruminating over the Irish difficulty in the course of my ride here, and thinking of the various solutions which might be found, it occurred to me that supposing the principal point, that of the change of system, to be settled, as I think it may be, by explanation, the other might be solved by Lord Mansfield's taking my office. He is quite equal to the official business, and has *words enough* at command to take the ostensible lead in the House of Lords. Whatever service I can do there to you or to the cause we are embarked in, you would equally command, and you might depend on my not neglecting that part of the business there which might be necessary in order to keep together *your* party in that House.

"I am not ignorant that the plan is liable to some objection, but it is out of all comparison preferable to the infinite mischief of breaking up a system with the maintenance of which the fate of the country seems to me to be in great degree connected.

"It would be wasting time to tell you how readily I should make such a sacrifice. You have put me in a situation to be able to do it without bringing distress or even inconvenience of any kind upon myself, or one still dearer to me; and even if you had not, I should not, at least I hope not, have thought that I ought to hesitate. The only thing I should feel in it that required explanation would be just to be able to tell enough of the story to show that I retired for accommodation, and not to avoid the difficulties of the moment; and if I could explain this in the first instance, I could sufficiently show by my public conduct afterwards that I should not be backward in taking my share of the public difficulties, whatever they are or may hereafter be.

"Pray consider this seriously. I am confident if you do so, you will think this arrangement much more beneficial to the public interest at this crisis than suffering yourself from any predilection or partiality to me to incur the hazard and certain evil that must attend the breaking up such a system as you have just formed.

"Ever most affectionately yours,

"G."

The generous offer of Lord Grenville was not accepted, nor even for one moment entertained. It seemed to Mr. Pitt, however, that a personal interview between Grattan and himself would bring matters to a clearer issue. Next morning therefore he wrote this note:

"Mr. Pitt presents his compliments to Mr. Grattan. He wishes much, if it is not disagreeable to Mr. Grattan, to have an opportunity of conversing with him confidentially on the subject of an arrangement in Ireland, and for that purpose would take the liberty of requesting to see him, either at four to-day or any time to-morrow morning most convenient to Mr. Grattan.

"Downing Street, Wednesday,
Oct. 15, 1794."

The interview thus proposed took place on the same day. Grattan found Pitt, as he described it, "very plain and very civil in his manner." As to the Lord-Lieutenancy, Mr. Pitt observed, "The question is, how shall Lord Westmorland be provided for?" As to measures, and above all the Roman Catholic question, Mr. Pitt is alleged to have stated his resolution as follows:—"Not to bring it forward as a Government measure; but if

Government were pressed, to yield it." In the biography of Mr. Grattan, by his son, it is stated that such were "the identical expressions." But I think it certain (although with the fairest intentions on Mr. Grattan's part) that the latter clause must have been either imperfectly heard or imperfectly remembered. It is quite clear from the other documents upon this question, some of them dated only the next day, that Pitt was fully determined not to pledge himself or his Cabinet positively as to their future course. It is quite clear, on the best testimonies we can now obtain, that the assurances given to various persons by Mr. Pitt in the winter of 1794 with respect to the Roman Catholic question went only, at the utmost, to his own favourable bias, but reserved in express words to his colleagues and himself full liberty to consider and decide on, as at the time seemed best, any measure that came to them from the Parliament of Ireland.

Indeed I must observe that there is not, nor does there purport to be, any complete report of this important conversation between the Irish patriot and the British Minister. In the passage referring to it from the biography of Grattan, the statements of the father are greatly intermingled and blended with the reflections of the son. Now I am bound to say that these two things are to be very differently viewed. The statements of Henry Grattan the elder deserve our utmost respect. The reflections of Henry Grattan the younger all through his five volumes are marked beyond all other things by the greatest possible degree of invective and vituperation against all whom he dislikes. Twice in

this very passage does Mr. Grattan the younger declare his persuasion that Mr. Pitt intended "to cheat," and that he managed the House of Commons only "by arts and money." I hope that it will not be thought incumbent on me, as the biographer of Mr. Pitt, to add to this last passage even a single word of comment or reply.

On the same afternoon, with a most scrupulous sense of honour, Mr. Pitt addressed to Mr. Grattan a second note.

"Mr. Pitt presents his compliments to Mr. Grattan. Having requested that the conversation which Mr. Grattan has had the goodness to allow him might be considered confidential, he does not think himself at liberty to refer to it without being sure that he has Mr. Grattan's permission; but he rather imagines he will have no objection to Mr. Pitt's doing so as far as may be necessary in any explanation on the subject with the Duke of Portland and any other of his colleagues.

"Mr. Pitt's anxiety to avoid any doubt on this point will be his apology for giving Mr. Grattan that additional trouble.

"Downing Street, Wednesday, Oct. 15, 1794,
$\frac{3}{4}$ past 5 P.M."

That Pitt was firm in his purpose will fully appear from the secret correspondence which passed next day between Windham and himself.

Mr. Windham to Mr. Pitt.

"DEAR SIR, (Endorsed Oct. 16, 1794.)

"*I* have likewise talked with Mr. Grattan since his conversation with you, and I had hoped for some

opening of better prospects. A very little would, I am persuaded, content them—I mean Mr. Grattan and his friends, if the matter could be fairly brought as a question of their moderation. What might give an unfavourable appearance to Mr. Grattan's conversation was a suspicion in his mind that more was meant than seemed to be declared; that there was an objection to the system more than a tenderness about particular persons. I really believe that if the C.[1] could be given up, —[2] might be saved. But I don't know, nor should I think, that there could be any secret article about that, and any understanding upon the subject would be too delicate and dangerous. If you cannot make up your mind to expose him to the risk, I fear the thing is desperate, and with it, I also fear, any hope of quiet or safety in Ireland. The acquiescence of men in the situation of G. and his friends would be an effort of virtue too great to be long continued.

"I ought not to disguise from you either the probable effects here, great or small: it is proper they should be before you. Though I could say nothing positive about myself till the return of Lord Spencer, yet it does not appear to me that it would be possible for me to stay on the grounds on which the D. of P. and Lord F. would go out, nor do I conceive that Lord S. would be, with respect to himself, of a different opinion. How much I deprecate such an extremity on the public account, you will easily conceive. I assure you I should hardly do so less on account of the perfect satisfaction that I have found in the connexion as it has hitherto subsisted.

"Yours, dear Sir, with great truth,

"W. WINDHAM."

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[1] The Chancellor (Fitzgibbon).

[2] In the MS. an initial, or perhaps two letters, but illegible.

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Windham.

"DEAR SIR, "Downing Street, Oct. 16, 1794.

"The more I consider every part of this unfortunate subject, the more I am confirmed in the impossibility either of consenting to the Chancellor's removal or of leaving either him or any of the supporters of Government exposed to the risk of the new system. What you say with respect to yourself, embitters the regret which, even without it, I should feel at the probable consequences of what has passed. My consolation under all the difficulties will be that I have nothing to reproach myself with in what has led to this misunderstanding; but I must struggle as well as I can with a distress which no means are left me to avoid without a sacrifice both of character and duty. Allow me only to add, that before you finally decide on your own line of conduct, I trust you will give me an opportunity of discussing with you without reserve the great public considerations which at this moment are involved in it.

"Yours, with great truth and regard,

"W. PITT."

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Windham.

"Downing Street, Oct. 16, 1794,

"DEAR SIR, ½ past 5.

"Strongly as I stated to you my feelings in my last letter, I fear, on looking at your letter again, that I have stated them in one respect imperfectly. Besides the impossibility of sacrificing any supporters of Government, or exposing them to the risk of a new

system, I ought to add that the very idea of a *new system* (as far as I understand what is meant by that term), and especially one formed without previous communication or concert with the rest of the King's servants here, or with the friends of Government in Ireland, is in itself what I feel it utterly impossible to accede to; and it appears to me to be directly contrary to the general principles on which our union was formed and has hitherto subsisted.

"Painful as the whole subject is, I feel nevertheless that it is material to leave no part of it liable to be misunderstood, and I therefore give you this additional trouble. "Yours, &c.,

"W. PITT."

It will be seen that Pitt was fully determined to risk the resignation of his new colleagues rather than act with injustice to his old supporters. To set his determination on the several points beyond doubt, and to make use of in discussion, he drew up the following

Memorandum.

"Much the best event of the present discussions would be some arrangement which avoided Lord Fitzwilliam's going to Ireland. But if satisfaction is given on the other points, it is impossible to put a negative on his going. If it were right to do so at all, it could only have been done by forming and notifying that determination as soon as it was fully known what had been the conduct of the party respecting this business. Not having been done at first, there is no tenable ground on which it can be done now. Even if the decision were still in our power, much as I should wish to avoid his going, I do not think it would be wise to break on that

ground. If so, it also follows that facility must be given to any reasonable arrangement. But before Lord Fitzwilliam can go, these four things are indispensable :—

"1st. A full explanation that all idea of a new system of measures, or of new principles of government in Ireland, as well as of any separate and exclusive right to conduct the department of Ireland differently from any other in the King's service, is disclaimed and relinquished.

"2nd. Complete security that Lord Fitzgibbon and all the supporters of Government shall not be displaced on the change, nor while they continue to act fairly in support of such a system as shall be approved here.

"3rd. That a situation shall previously be found for Lord Westmorland, such as may show on the face of it that he quits Ireland with his own free consent. This can only be from his having a situation in the Cabinet, or one of the great Court offices, or some respectable office which has been held by persons quitting those situations.

"4th. An adequate and liberal provision for Douglas, if the office of Secretary of State is not granted to him.

"If these points are arranged, and the change of the Lord-Lieutenant is settled, Lord Westmorland must be prevailed on not to press his recommendations to the Provostship and Secretary of State.

"W. P."

For above a fortnight longer the question continued in suspense. We find Lord Auckland—who was now residing at his house of Beckenham, and who, in 1793, had received an English in addition to his Irish peerage

—express himself with considerable bitterness, and, as I think, considerable injustice, to his old political friends :—

"I have said we are like the man in the nightmare; we feel the weight and horror, and yet sleep on. The scramble of the Portland set is all in that style; they look with horror towards Jacobinism, but in the mean time are absorbed in the old and sleepy game of patronage, in the pursuit of which they are at this instant risking the convulsion of Ireland."

These words are taken from a letter to Mr. John Beresford, dated October 23rd. On the other side of the question Mr. Grattan wrote as follows to a private friend :—

"MY DEAR M'CAN, "Oct. 27, 1794.

"Had I anything to write, I should have written. All I can say is, that nothing is determined at present. Mr. Pitt don't agree to those extensive powers which we were taught to believe the Duke of Portland had. However, I should not be surprised if it were settled well at last, and that Lord Fitzwilliam went over; nor yet would the contrary surprise me. This week will decide.

"Desire them not to write from Tinnehinch, for I hope to leave this on Monday or Tuesday next.

"Yours most sincerely,

"H. GRATTAN."

In this controversy, as finally settled, Mr. Pitt prevailed on every point, the Duke of Portland and his other Whig colleagues remaining in their places. The retirement of Lord Westmorland was delayed until

he could be invested with a high Court office as Master of the Horse. Then, and not till then, was Lord Fitzwilliam sworn in before the King as Lord Lieutenant. The Irish Chancellor was not to be removed, nor yet any other holder of office in Ireland, unless for any act of insubordination in office. It seems, however, probable that the Duke of Portland, who was always sparing of words and expressed himself with great difficulty even in private conversation, may have but very imperfectly explained this last stipulation to Lord Fitzwilliam. Certain it is, as we shall find, that Lord Fitzwilliam on reaching Dublin began to act at once in utter disregard of it.

By the appointment of Earl Fitzwilliam as Lord Lieutenant there remained the office of Lord President to fill. The King was gratified by the selection for that post of one of his personal friends and followers of the Coalition period, Lord Stormont, who had recently succeeded as second Earl of Mansfield. The following letter will best explain by what arrangement that nomination and Lord Westmorland's were combined. It is addressed by Mr. Pitt to the former Lord Graham, now Duke of Montrose and Master of the Horse.

"My dear Duke, "Holwood, Nov. 21, 1794.

"Understanding that you are expected in town to-day, I take the first opportunity of writing to mention a proposal which I flatter myself has nothing in it likely to be unacceptable to you; and I know you will be inclined to give it a favourable consideration when I tell you that it will furnish the only

means for relieving Government from an embarrassment of the most serious nature. With a view of Lord Fitzwilliam's going to Ireland, there are circumstances that render it necessary for me to be able to open some situation of distinction for Lord Westmorland. Lord Mansfield would be to succeed Lord Fitzwilliam as President of the Council, and would relinquish his office of Justice General in Scotland. Considering the rank and value of the latter office, I am led to hope that you would not consider a grant of it for life as an unfavourable exchange for the situation which you now hold, and to which Lord Westmorland might succeed. I wish, however, rather to make the proposal to you on the ground of affording me at a very anxious moment a very essential accommodation, which I shall feel as an additional proof of the friendship and kindness which I have always experienced from you.

"Believe me yours sincerely,

"W. PITT."

Thus reinforced the administration met the Parliament on the 30th of December. The King in his opening speech declared that, notwithstanding the disappointments and reverses of the last campaign, he retained a firm conviction of the necessity of persisting in a vigorous prosecution of the war. He announced his acceptance of the Crown of Corsica, and the conclusion of a treaty for the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the Princess Caroline of Brunswick.

The Addresses in reply gave rise to warm debates with some circumstances not wholly in favour of the Government. Among the Peers, indeed, there were

only the usual speakers of Opposition, as Lords Lansdowne and Stanhope, and the usual minority of ten or twelve. But in the Commons several members of great weight had become inclined to peace from the reverses of the last campaign and from the fall of Robespierre. Foremost among these stood Mr. Wilberforce. In spite of the personal friendship which had long connected him with the Prime Minister, and of which he foresaw the too probable severance, he moved an amendment to the Address, advising an endeavour for peace. He was seconded by Mr. Duncombe, his colleague in the representation of Yorkshire, and supported by Mr. Bankes of Dorset. In the division which ensued, at four in the morning, the amendment had only 73 votes against 246. But the secession of such men was of itself no inconsiderable aggravation to the troubles of the Ministry, and no light blow to the war party throughout England. Mr. Wilberforce has noted in his journal, "When first I went to the Levee after moving my Amendment, the King cut me."[3]

The doubts and misgivings of Mr. Wilberforce had, as was just, far greater weight with the public than the continued denunciations of the war by its original opponents. Thus, on the 6th of January, Earl Stanhope brought forward a motion against any interference in the internal affairs of France, but with so much of ardour and so little of concert, that on dividing the House he was not supported by any other Peer. In consequence of this disappointment Lord Stanhope, though

[3] Life of Wilberforce, by his Sons, vol. ii. p. 73.

up to that time one of the most active members of the House of Lords, wholly seceded from it during the next five years.[4]

While thus in the House of Commons the war party was enfeebled by the secession of Mr. Wilberforce and his friends, a blow still far more serious, still far more unexpected, was dealt on it in Holland. It was known that the armies had withdrawn to winter quarters. It was thought that the campaign had concluded. But as it chanced, the winter in that region set in with extreme severity, such as had not been felt for many years. The great rivers which form the barrier of Holland to the southward were frozen over, and seemed to invite rather than to guard against invasion. General Pichegru, who was ill at Brussels, hastened back to his post. The French soldiers, displaying their usual alacrity for action, came forth with scanty clothing and rent shoes, but without a murmur, from their comfortable quarters. The ice being strong enough to bear them, they crossed with the greatest ease both the Meuse and the Waal. General Walmoden with the English and Hanoverians fell back towards Deventer to effect their retreat by way of Westphalia. The Prince of Orange with the Dutch fell back towards Utrecht and Amsterdam. He sent to ask for a suspension of hostilities and to offer terms of peace, but both were disdainfully rejected. Then no other resource was left him. The French troops

[4] See the "Public Characters" of 1800-1801, p. 125. A medal was struck on this occasion in his honour with a motto, "The Minority of One, 1795."

pressed forward in overwhelming numbers; and the French party, which had been struck down in 1787, again raised its head. The Prince relinquished the contest and embarked for England, while Pichegru entered Amsterdam in triumph on the 1st of Pluviose, as he termed it, or the 20th of January.

Nor was this all. The greater part of the Dutch fleet was ice-bound in the Zuyder Zee. Against it some regiments of cavalry and light artillery were at once despatched by Pichegru; and for the first time perhaps in the annals of war did ships surrender to horsemen. Only a small number of armed vessels that lay in the outer ports could sail away to England as adhering to the House of Orange. A new Constitution was then proclaimed throughout the country, abolishing the dignity of Stadtholder, and setting up a democratic Republic under the dictation of the French.

The rapid subjugation of the Dutch afforded two fresh arguments to the friends of peace in England—as evincing the power of the French arms, and as freeing us from the obligations of burthensome allies. Nevertheless, large majorities in both Houses of Parliament continued steady to the Minister. Motions tending to a cessation of the war were brought forward by the Duke of Bedford in the one House and by Mr. Grey in the other, but without the smallest success. A loan of 18,000,000*l.*, requisite to carry on the war, was cheerfully voted, and was negotiated at the rate of less than five per cent. Another loan of 3,000,000*l.*, for the use of the Court of Vienna, was assisted by the

guarantee of England. Several new taxes were also imposed; one especially of a guinea a year upon every person who wore hairpowder, an impost which, from the prevalence at the time of that silly fashion, would, according to Mr. Pitt's calculation, produce annually the net sum of 210,000*l.*

In February of this year there was a change in the Mastership of the Ordnance. It had been decided that the Duke of Richmond should be removed from it for the sake of concord in the Cabinet. But His Grace was continued on the Staff, and continued to give his general support to the administration.[5] Indeed, notwithstanding their difference from time to time as colleagues, he retained the deepest respect for Mr. Pitt. Four years after Pitt's death, we find the Duke accept the Presidency of the Pitt Club, and write as follows to Mr. Rose: "There is nothing I pride myself on so much as having been the intimate friend of such a man."[6]

The vacant office of the Ordnance with the Cabinet seat were conferred on a meritorious public servant, Lord Cornwallis, who had also received some time before the Garter and a Marquisate. At the same time that Lord Cornwallis became Master General of the Ordnance and a Cabinet Minister, the Duke of York was named Commander-in-Chief.

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[5] The King to Mr. Pitt, Jan. 29, 1795.

[6] Diaries, &c., of the Right Hon. Geo. Rose, vol. ii. p. 220, ed. 1860.

CHAPTER XX.

1795.

Precipitate measures of Lord Fitzwilliam — Dismissal of Mr. Beresfor and Mr. Cooke — Addresses from Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters — Mr. Grattan's Bill — Recall of Lord Fitzwilliam and appointment of Lord Camden — Riot in Dublin — Contentions in the Irish House of Commons — Rejection of Mr. Grattan's Bill — Foundation of Maynooth — Trial of the Rev. W. Jackson — Brothers the Prophet and his disciples — Marriage of the Prince of Wales — Acquittal of Warren Hastings — Provision for Burke — Distress in France and England — Anxiety of Pitt.

We must now after this brief interval revert to the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland. There is no doubt that the intentions of Lord Fitzwilliam were upright and high-minded. But some persons, perhaps less disinterested than himself, were busy at his side. Even in December, 1794, before the new Viceroy had left England, we find Lord Auckland predict that his new supporters would be "restless to get a larger share of patronage." It was again and again represented to Lord Fitzwilliam that certain persons holding offices in Ireland had too much power—that they would obstruct the new administration and overshadow the new Lord-Lieutenant—and that they ought to be removed. The persons thus aimed at were especially Mr. John Beresford, Chief Commissioner of the Revenue, and directing several other kinsmen in place, and Mr. Edward Cooke, the Secretary at War.

Under these circumstances the course for Lord Fitzwilliam to pursue seems clear and plain. He should have commenced his government and judged for himself. He should have fairly tried whether the gentlemen in question were in truth, or wished to be, obstacles in his path. If so, he might have laid their conduct before the Cabinet in England, or even perhaps after full trial have dismissed them himself. Instead of this, he chose to rely solely on the representations of others. There really is no answer to the plain statement of this part of the case as made in a private letter from the Chancellor of Ireland. "One broad fact," writes Lord Fitzgibbon, "must damn him on this subject for ever. He landed here on Sunday evening (January 4, 1795), and was confined to his room by indisposition for the whole of the next day. On Wednesday Mr. Bowes Daly was sent to you (Mr. Beresford, with a notice of intended dismissal). So that he had one day only to inquire into the multiplied acts of malversation which he alleges against you as his justification for wishing to remove you."[1]

In sending notice of dismissal through his Secretary to Mr. Beresford and Mr. Cooke, Lord Fitzwilliam did his best to soften the communication. To the first he offered the full amount of his salary as retiring allowance, and to the latter a pension of 1200*l.* a-year. But both these gentlemen, then in the prime of life, were by no means disposed to retire from active service.

[1] Letter of March 26, 1795, as published in the Beresford Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 88.

Still less were they disposed to brook any imputation, express or implied, upon their public character. Mr. Beresford set out for London, there took counsel with Lord Auckland and his other friends, and earnestly appealed by letter to the justice of Mr. Pitt. "I hope," said Mr. Pitt to Rose, "there may be some mistake in the statement, because it would be an open breach of a most solemn promise." The Whig friends of Lord Fitzwilliam in the Cabinet could by no means approve his conduct. It had been—so Lord Loughborough explained to Mr. Grattan—even apart from the merits of the question, most discourteous to Mr. Pitt. "Supposing Mr. Pitt merely the First Commissioner of the Treasury, without the influence usually attached to that office, to have removed an officer in his department by a letter from the Lord-Lieutenant's Secretary, would not have been agreeable to that respect which Ministers owe to each other."[2]

In public measures Lord Fitzwilliam was equally headlong. The state of the Roman Catholics had been the subject of many anxious conversations in England. By the Acts of the two last years they were freed from the Penal Statutes, but there still weighed upon them great political disabilities—above all as excluding them from Parliament and restricting their possession of arms. A measure for their complete equality on all points with the Protestants was now desired, though not as yet publicly proposed. Mr. Grattan was especially

[2] Letter from Lord Loughborough, dated Feb. 28, 1795, and published in the Memoirs of Grattan, by his Son (vol. iv. p. 198).

charged with the conduct of their cause, and had great power either to press forward or delay it. The Prime Minister, though guarded in his language, was friendly and comprehensive in his views. Indeed it may be doubted whether any one single member of the Cabinet was at this time hostile to the measure on its merits. The difficulty with all was only as to the means and time. But these were not mere details. On the contrary they were matters of paramount importance. It might be a cause of peril, it would certainly be a cause of alarm, to make such momentous changes in the midst of a critical war. Nor could a measure of complete Roman Catholic emancipation be carried through at that juncture without the assent, or at least the acquiescence, of the main Protestant party. The feelings and wishes of that party if directly expressed could not be set aside at a time when so much treason was astir, when so many Republican conspiracies were brewing, when so much of combined exertion was needed to uphold the Throne.

Under these difficulties Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Portland conferred with Lord Fitzwilliam before he went, and, as I have already in part explained it, came to the following result. The new Viceroy was on no account to bring forward the emancipation of the Roman Catholics of himself or as a Ministerial measure. It was highly desirable that this question should be deferred until more tranquil times. If, however, the Roman Catholics themselves, or Mr. Grattan as their champion, insisted on pressing it at once, the Ministers in England would deliberate on the provisions

of the Bill so introduced, and consider how far they could in prudence or in policy give it their support.

Here again, had Lord Fitzwilliam been a man of ability, acting from deliberate judgment rather than from sudden impulse, the course which he should have taken seems very clear. On arriving in Ireland he should have felt his way. He ought either to have shunned any public declarations on the point at issue, or have expressed in them his desire to reserve himself until after some personal experience of the country and of office. Such was the course that he might have taken; the very reverse was the course that he took. Almost immediately upon his landing he received addresses from bodies of Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters, and in his answers was understood as intimating his agreement to their wishes. The consequence was that far from allaying he stirred the flame. Petitions to the Irish House of Commons praying for the complete emancipation of the Catholics poured in from every county in Ireland. By the middle of February it was computed that the number of signatures to these exceeded half a million.[3] Mr. Grattan, even had he wished it, had no longer the power to hold back. On the 12th of February he moved to bring in a Bill enumerating all the exceptions to complete equality and abolishing them all.

The rash precipitation of Lord Fitzwilliam both in dismissing statesmen and in deciding measures was not

[3] See on this point the letter of Dr. Hussey in Burke's Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 277.

long in bearing bitter fruits. Resentment and alarm took possession of the minds of the Irish Protestants. They looked on the dismissal of their political friends as casting light upon the measure framed for their religious opponents, as revealing its true spirit and design. All hope of their concert or even their acquiescence was gone. Only two days after the motion of Grattan, the Chancellor wrote to his friend in London declaring that the King could not give his assent to the measure "without a direct breach of his Coronation Oath. Whenever," he added, "Mr. Grattan brings in his Bill and it is printed, I mean to send it over to England with comments in reference to British Statutes which certainly bind the King upon this subject."[4]

The King himself, it may be added, conceived from the first the strongest disrelish to the scheme. In a Private Memorandum drawn up for Mr. Pitt, and dated on the 6th of February, we find him argue at length against it, and call it (but might not that be in truth its praise?) "a total change of the principles of government which have been followed in that kingdom since the abdication of King James the Second."

Such scruples were by no means confined to the King alone. They extended to many of Pitt's most zealous followers. They extended to many even of those who held office under him. These gentlemen had from the first viewed with jealousy the accession of the Portland party, and that jealousy was now inflamed to the highest pitch. As one sample, among several others, of this feel-

[4] Letter in the Beresford Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 73.

ing on their part, I shall here insert a letter which the Solicitor-General, Sir John Mitford, addressed to Mr. Pitt—a letter which evinces, let me say, in passing, the upright and independent spirit of the writer.

"DEAR SIR, "Adelphi, Feb. 14, 1795.

"It is with much pain that I prevail on myself again to trouble you on a subject which perhaps you wish, if possible, to banish from your thoughts. But the evident difficulty of your present situation, the solitude in which you seem to be placed amongst a throng of Cabinet Ministers, the ignorance in which I believe most of your friends are with respect both to your real situation and your intentions, and their apparent uncertainty whether you are not acting upon the impulse of the moment because you are unwilling to look at the evil in its full extent, give me the greatest uneasiness. This uneasiness is increased by knowing that your conduct of late has turned some warm friends into cold friends, or perhaps bitter enemies. I confess too that I feel not merely on your account, but in some degree on my own. I have perhaps too much pride, and am not much disposed to brook disgrace, which I think I see fast approaching. As long as I shall hold the place I have, I will endeavour to discharge its duties to the best of my power; and though conscious perhaps that I ought not to have taken it, and wishing ardently that I had declined it, I shall be unwilling to quit it in a manner distressing to you. But I shall not like to be told that I have kept it too long, and I perceive that the Attorney-General's mind is labouring under the same difficulties. You must be aware that almost all your friends feel something of the same uneasiness. Many of them apprehend that what they long ago fore-

told has at length happened; that you are completely surrounded, that you stand in effect alone, that you are no longer your own master, and that if you can extricate yourself from the chains prepared for you, you have not a moment to lose. What has happened in Ireland seems to be generally considered as a death-blow. I speak in some degree from rumour, in some degree from conjecture, but not entirely.

. . . . . .

"In fairly giving you my thoughts, I believe I best prove myself

"Faithfully yours,

"JOHN MITFORD."

But let us for a moment waive the scruples of the King, or of a portion of his servants—scruples which then were not publicly known. Let us assume (no light assumption) that the Ministers could have overcome those scruples, and had been able to give to the Bill of Mr. Grattan their active aid. Even on that supposition, considering how the Irish House of Commons was at that time composed, I do not think it probable that the Bill could have been carried through. Carried, at all events, it could not have been without a tremendous party battle—without a political conflict shaking Ireland, and perhaps Great Britain also, to the very centre. Would it be possible to hazard that political conflict at a time when there were daily threats to Ireland at least of a foreign invasion? Might it not, on the other hand, be hoped that in such a ferment and against such obstacles the loyal majority of the Roman Catholics would themselves feel the propriety of a pause

on the part of the administration—of a desire to abide for the present by the large concessions of the two last years?

Moved by considerations such as these, and acting with entire unanimity, although with great regret, the Cabinet in England came to the decision that Lord Fitzwilliam must be at once recalled. Lord Fitzwilliam himself had been much chafed even by the first objections both to the dismissal of Mr. Beresford and to the Bill of Mr. Grattan. On the 21st of February Mr. Pitt addressed to him a private letter, stating courteously but firmly his fixed resolution on both points. Receiving that letter, His Excellency on the 25th summoned the Chancellor to his presence, and announced his determination to lay down his government and return to England within a very few days. The news was quickly noised on all sides, to the joy no doubt of the Protestant, but to the sorrow of the more numerous Roman Catholic party.

Lord Fitzwilliam, however, did not fulfil his threat of immediate departure; he remained at Dublin until the 25th of March. The day of his departure was one of general gloom: the shops were shut; no business of any kind was transacted; and the greater part of the citizens put on mourning; while some of the most respectable among them drew his coach down to the water-side.[5] A corresponding degree of aversion was showed a few days afterwards when the new Viceroy, Lord Camden, arrived. Yet, as Mr. Grattan owned,

[5] See the Annual Register, 1795, p. 226.

Lord Camden had considerable claims to public regard from the exalted character of his father, and he brought with him a living sign of moderation in the person of his Secretary, Thomas Pelham, a gentleman who had been bred in Whig principles, and who had filled the same office during the administration of the Duke of Portland.

Such considerations have no weight in troubled times. When the new Lord-Lieutenant was sworn in at Dublin Castle there was a formidable riot—which, however, the populace directed against their own countrymen in office. They assailed the coaches of the Chancellor and Primate with volleys of stones; one stone striking the Chancellor on the forehead, and slightly wounding him over the left eye. Another party attacked the new Custom-House, but without success, desirous, as they phrased it, "to extinguish" Mr. Beresford. Their cry was "Liberty, Equality, and no Lord-Lieutenant!" and they were decked with green cockades.

In the Irish House of Commons there were fierce contentions. The course of Lord Fitzwilliam was eagerly discussed; and Mr. Grattan spoke with ardour in defence of his absent friend. Yet he quickly found that the majority was by no means upon his side. When at last, on the 4th of May, there came on the Second Reading of his Bill, it was, after long debate, rejected; 84 members voting in its favour, but against it 155. Some writers, not well versed in the practical working of our Parliamentary system, have assumed that a complete change had come over the Irish House of Commons, since, as they observe, on the 12th of

February no more than three members spoke against the first introduction of the Bill, and since they did not call for a division. These writers have overlooked the fact that the motion for leave to introduce a Bill often gives rise to hostile speeches, but very seldom to a hostile division; least of all when that motion proceeds from a man of eminent fame.

In England, Lord Fitzwilliam, appealing to the judgment of the nation, published two letters of great length which he had addressed to Lord Carlisle. There were also two motions in Parliament on the subject of his recall, one by the Duke of Norfolk in which Lord Fitzwilliam himself spoke, the other by Mr. Jekyll, backed by Mr. Fox. Lord Grenville conducted the defence of the Government in the House of Peers, and Mr. Pitt of course in the House of Commons. Both declined a discussion of the circumstances as injurious at that time to the public service, and took their stand on the undoubted prerogative of the King to appoint or to dismiss his confidential servants.

It seemed probable at one time that this controversy would have been continued with even sharper weapons than the tongue or pen. A passage of Lord Fitzwilliam's published letters applied to Mr. Beresford the words "imputed malversation;" Mr. Beresford gave his Lordship the lie direct; a challenge ensued; and it was only by the quick interposition of magistrates that a duel was prevented, when the parties had already met with pistols in hand.[6] Lord Fitzwilliam, after

[6] See Mr. Beresford's own account of this affair in his Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 115.

the duel was prevented, said he need no longer scruple to make an apology, and made it in generous terms. Many pamphlets also came forth in confutation or corroboration of Lord Fitzwilliam's, and charges of ill-faith and treachery were freely levelled at the Government. But when calmly viewed, the ground for these charges is so slight that they do not seem to require any more detailed examination. A single fact may suffice in answer to them. The Duke of Portland, Lord Spencer, and Mr. Windham were men of high feeling and unblemished honour. They had long been friends and allies of Lord Fitzwilliam. Yet they, with whatever reluctance, concurred in the necessity of his recall, and remained in office as the colleagues of Mr. Pitt.

Thus was the prospect of equal laws in Ireland marred by precipitation on the one side and by prejudice on the other. Thus did the hopes of a better system vanish like an airy dream. In one respect, and one respect only, were the schemes of Lord Fitzwilliam's Government fulfilled in Lord Camden's—in the establishment, namely, of a College for the education of the Roman Catholic priesthood. A Bill for that purpose was brought into the Irish House of Commons on the part of the Government during the month of April, and it passed with little opposition. The result was the foundation of Maynooth.

Up to this time, and under the harsh repression of the Penal Laws, the young men designed for Holy Orders in the Roman Catholic Church had been brought up in foreign colleges. Some few, who attained great

eminence in after years, had gone to Portugal and Spain. Thus, for example, Bishop Doyle (best known as J. K. L., from the signature which he adopted in his political writings) had been trained at Coimbra, and Archbishop Curtis at Salamanca. But by far the greater number went to Douay, St. Omer, and other colleges in France. The Revolutionary torrent had swept these colleges away, and no others nearly as convenient could be found. Under these circumstances Archbishop Troy, on behalf of himself and the other Roman Catholic prelates, had presented, in 1794, a Memorial to the Earl of Westmorland as Lord Lieutenant, representing the absolute necessity of some place of education for the Roman Catholic Clergy, and praying a Royal Licence for the endowment of an ecclesiastical academy in Ireland. The Memorial was favourably entertained, and the College of Maynooth was instituted in the spring of the following year.

The founders of this College, besides the manifest necessity of the case to the Roman Catholics, looked forward to great national benefits. They hoped that the Irish priests, if trained within the confines of the kingdom, would be the more certainly imbued with attachment to the King and Constitution. They hoped that this establishment, voted by Protestants for the sake of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, would be a pledge of peace and good will between the two communions. Certainly, at least considering the general assent with which the measure passed, they could not foresee that in after years it would be so bitterly denounced.

But among the many who have thus on abstract principles denounced it, there are some, at least, who have paid regard in a spirit of candour to the special circumstances of the case. They have been willing to consider how far in this transaction the national faith might be engaged. They have found that it was proffered as a boon to the Roman Catholics of Ireland at the very time when their hope of equal rights derived from Mr. Grattan's Bill was dashed to the ground—at the very time when they were called on to make common cause with their Protestant brethren and join in measures of resistance to the threatened French invasion. Passed at such a time, and received in such a spirit, I believe that the foundation of Maynooth does bear many features of a compromise or compact. I am sure that it could not be cancelled without some breach of the English honour and some disparagement to the English name.

In the midst of this political agitation of Ireland there came on at Dublin, after long delay, the trial for High Treason of the Rev. William Jackson. He was a native of Ireland and a clergyman of the Established Church, but for several years past a resident at Paris. It was his object to establish a concert of measures between the rulers of France and the malcontents of Ireland. But in his negotiations he had relied on an attorney of ill repute, named Cockayne, who betrayed him to the British Government. When he was brought to trial at Dublin Curran stood forth as his Counsel, but Cockayne appeared against him as a witness, and he was found Guilty. When, on a

subsequent day, he was again brought up to receive judgment, the unhappy man, who had swallowed poison that same morning, sank down in the agonies of death and expired in the presence of his judges.

A similar condemnation might have probably awaited his confederate Wolfe Tone, had he not, in June this year, anticipated an arrest by a timely escape to America.

It is worthy of note how often we find the tidings of state revolution go side by side with tales of supernatural power. The former seem to have a tendency to stir up in the human mind a craving or a credulity for the last. Thus, at the very height of the Reign of Terror, the cold heart of Robespierre warmed to the prophecies of a female enthusiast, Catherine Theot. And thus in England, at nearly the same momentous period, the public attention was seriously attracted by a male fanatic. This was Richard Brothers, a native of Newfoundland, and at one time a Lieutenant in the Navy. His imagination had become disordered by pondering over some dark books on the Apocalyptic prophecies. Supposing himself to have received a Divine Commission, he assumed some lofty titles—"Nephew of God" and "Prince of the Hebrews." He predicted the speedy and complete destruction of London; but on the other hand he promised to establish his kingdom in Jerusalem before the close of the year 1798. For the support of these views he relied on divers signs, visions, and portents. Thus, for example, he declared that on one occasion he plainly saw the Devil sauntering in London streets. Here are his own

words: "After this I was in a vision, having the angel of God near me, and saw Satan walking leisurely into London." [7]

Strange though it may seem, it is yet a common case, that pretensions even so wild as these found some ready believers among educated and accomplished men. Thus one of the greatest artists of that age presented to the world a fine print of Brothers, with these words beneath:—"Fully believing this to be the man whom God has appointed, I engrave his likeness. —William Sharp."

Thus again, Mr. Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, a gentleman who had filled an office of trust in India, who had published a translation of the Gentoo Code of Laws, and who was now Member of Parliament for Lymington, avowed himself a follower of the new Prophet. Twice in the Session of 1795 he brought the claims and the sufferings of Mr. Brothers before the House of Commons; but, having no seconder, his motions fell of course to the ground.

So long as the visions of Mr. Brothers were confined to the world of spirits or to the land of Judæa, they might be disregarded by the Government; but the case was altered when they took the form of a printed notice to His Majesty in the following terms:—

"The Lord God commands me to say to you, George the Third, King of England, that, immediately upon my being revealed in London to the Hebrews as their

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[7] Brothers's Prophecies, part i. p. 41, as quoted in a note to Southey's Poems, vol. iii. p. 90, ed. 1838.

Prince and to all nations as their Governor, your Crown must be delivered up to me, that all your power and authority may cease."

On the 3rd of March the Prophet was brought before the Privy Council under a warrant from the Secretary of State. Subsequently a commission was issued to inquire into the state of his mind; and the verdict of a Jury having declared him a lunatic, he was sent to Bedlam. In 1806 he was released by an order from Lord Chancellor Erskine, and he survived till 1824, not even then wholly destitute of followers. One of the last of these, John Finlayson by name, published, so lately as 1848, a tract entitled "The Last Trumpet and Flying Angel;" and in this tract we find him write as follows: "God gave me a dream and a vision of Mr. Brothers, who told me that he approved of all I had done, and lifting his two hands high over his head, he rejoiced mightily at all I had written and published."

On the 8th of April the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the Princess Caroline was solemnized at the Chapel Royal, St. James's. Some months before Lord Malmesbury had been despatched to Brunswick to ask in due form the hand of the Princess and bring her over to England. He found the Duchess, a sister of George the Third, not a little elated at her daughter's prospects. All the young German Princesses, she said, had learnt English in hopes of becoming Princess of Wales.[8] The bride herself, then

[8] Lord Malmesbury's Diary, Nov. 22, 1794.

twenty-six years of age, made no very favourable impression on the experienced diplomatist. He thought that she had naturally in some degree both good temper and good sense, but was spoiled by ill examples and a faulty education.

On the other side the prospect was quite as far from satisfactory. The Prince, in his conversation with the King which decided the proposal of marriage, had expressed his desire to lead a moral and regular life.[9] But he had little constancy in his good resolutions even if they were sincerely formed. It was rumoured by the public that a lady of high rank held over him at this time a paramount influence. With signal want of propriety in any point of view, the Prince selected this very lady to meet his bride at Greenwich on her first landing, and to attend Her Royal Highness in the same coach to St. James's.

His own first interview with the Princess was by no means such as could be wished. Lord Malmesbury, the only other person present, has described it. He says that the Princess, according to the established form, attempted to kneel before the Prince when he came in, that he raised her gracefully enough and embraced her. But immediately afterwards he turned round, retired to a distant part of the apartment, and calling Lord Malmesbury to him said, "Harris, I am not well; pray get me a glass of brandy."

Such then was the unpromising outset of this most unhappy marriage.

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[9] The King to Mr. Pitt, Aug. 24, 1794.

In April Pitt was confined by an attack of gout, which however in his own letters is treated very lightly.

"Wimbledon, Monday, April 20, 1795.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"Your letter, which I received on Saturday, found me recovering from a very moderate and regular gout, and able on that day to remove hither. Two days of quiet and country air have completed my cure, with the exception only of being probably obliged to wear rather a larger shoe for some days to come. This last circumstance will perhaps exempt me from the crowded drawing-rooms and balls which are to be repeated in the course of this week. If it has this effect in addition to having already made me much better in general health, I shall have no reason to quarrel with my confinement. I have nothing very new to tell exactly at the present moment, and so many interesting occurrences of different sorts have been crowded into the last four or five months, that one should be at a loss where to begin or end the reflections they lead to. I look forward with much impatience to an interval of leisure sufficient to have the comfort of talking over with you the long history of this short period. It is too early yet to say whether I can promise myself that satisfaction in the course of this summer. I trust, however, it is not impossible, especially if the weakness and distraction of France, which seems likely to lead to the best solution of all our difficulties, goes on increasing as rapidly as it has done lately.

. . . . . .

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

On the 23rd of April the House of Lords brought to a conclusion the long-pending trial of Hastings. The Indian topics which it involved had wholly ceased to attract the public interest. There was only some stir from time to time at the able speeches made by the Managers of the Impeachment, and by Mr. Law, the chief Counsel for the defence. There had grown to be a general feeling that the Charges against Hastings were not sufficiently proved, or that even if they were, the length of the trial was of itself no inconsiderable penalty. Burke indeed retained against the culprit, for so he deemed him, all his early zeal. He deprecated with the greatest warmth all idea of concession or of clemency. So early as the spring of 1794 we find him urge Mr. Pitt "not to suffer the House of Commons to be dishonoured by the Indian faction."[1] But almost every one else was weary of the trial and impatient for its close. No more than twenty-nine Lords had of late attended to hear the evidence. It was, indeed, as Burke in his letter calls it, "a miserable remnant of the Peers." No more than twenty-nine Lords therefore thought themselves entitled to appear and vote when summoned in due state to give sentence in Westminster Hall. Of these, only six pronounced Hastings guilty on the Charges relative to Cheyte Sing and to the Begums of Oude. On some points the majority in his favour was greater still. On some others his acquittal was unanimous. Upon this the prisoner, (for so in legal phrase he continued to be called) was

[1] Letter of Mr. Burke, dated March 14, 1794 (Pitt Papers).

directed to come into court. He came, and as on the first day of his trial, he knelt down. Then the Lord Chancellor Loughborough desired him to rise, and addressed him in these words: "Warren Hastings, you are acquitted of all the Charges of Impeachment brought against you by the Commons and of all the matters contained therein. You and your bail therefore are discharged." Mr. Hastings then bowed and withdrew.

Thus did Hastings prevail at last over his accusers. But from the length of his trial his victory bore along with it nearly all the concomitants of a defeat. It was not only that his mind had been harassed and soured—that his fair hopes of some high office had been dashed—that the Coronet once rising in near prospect had wholly faded from his view. His own private fortune and the hoards, as they were termed, of Mrs. Hastings, had become exhausted by his lawyers' bills and the other charges of his long defence. When he left the Bar of the House of Lords acquitted and set free, he was almost a ruined man. Then it was that the Directors of the East India Company displayed the generous spirit which has seldom, if ever, been found wanting to any of their great public servants. They proposed to repay to Hastings all the legal costs of his trial, and to settle on him moreover a pension of 5000*l.* a-year. Dundas, however, as President of the Board of Control, refused to give his consent. It could not be expected that a statesman who had taken a forward part in pressing the accusation of Hastings should readily agree to schemes for his reward. There was a long controversy and a final compromise. The Company

was permitted to grant Hastings an annuity of 4000*l.*, and to advance to him a sum of money without interest. The retired Governor General had, however, contracted in India some habits of expense and carelessness. On several subsequent occasions he found it necessary to apply to the Company for further assistance, which was on each occasion cheerfully afforded. Books and gardening gave him all the solace that they can to an ambitious mind. He lived almost entirely at Daylesford, and survived to the great age of eighty-five, dying in August, 1818, of a gradual and gentle decay.

In this Session Mr. Pitt did not, as he had designed, bring down a Message from the King for a grant to Mr. Burke. He desired, if he could, to spare to the retired statesman the uneasiness of an angry debate. And the means were, he found, in his power. Certain West India Duties called the Four-and-a-Half per Cents. —the same on which Lady Chatham's pension stood— were still so far at the disposal of the Crown that a further annuity of 2500*l.* to Mr. Burke could be assigned upon them without the need of any vote from the House of Commons.[2] There was no delay in the payments, although the necessary forms were not completed until October in this year. Then did Burke write again to the Prime Minister, both to express his thanks and to convey his counsels, and both in his ever admirable style.

[2] Life of Burke, by Prior, p. 409, ed. 1854.

"Beaconsfield, October 28, 1795.

"DEAR SIR,

"I send you with this a letter of acknowledgment through you to the King for his extraordinary goodness to me. It is ostensible, if you think it of any use that it should be so.

"You have signally obliged me. I am a person incapable of any active return for the services I receive, but I make some sort of amends for the inefficiency of a feeble body and an exhausted mind by the sentiments of a grateful heart.

"You have provided for me all I am capable of receiving in the last stage of my declining life—that is, Repose. I have only to wish you all those good things which you can or ought to look for in the vigour of your years and in the great place you fill—much manly exertion and much glory attendant on your labours. Indeed you have the prospect of a long and laborious day before you. Everything is arduous about you. But you are called to that situation, and you have abilities for it. I hope in God that you will not distrust your faculties, or your cause, or your country. Our people have more in them than they exactly know of themselves. They act on the condition of our nature. We cannot lead, but we will follow if we are well led, and the spirit that is really in us is properly and powerfully exercised. There is one thing I pray for in your favour (for in you is our last human hope)—that you may not fall into the one great error from whence there is no return. I trust in the mercy of God to you, and to us all, that you may never be led to think that this war is, in its principles or in anything that belongs to it, the least resembling any other war; or that what is called a peace with the robbery of France can by any plan of policy be rendered reconcilable with the inward re-

pose, or with the external strength, power, or influence of this kingdom. This, to me, is as clear as the light under the meridian sun; and this conviction, for these five years past and in the midst of other deep and piercing griefs, has cost me many an anxious hour at midday and at midnight.

"I trust you are too discerning and too generous not to distinguish the faults of too earnest a zeal from an unbecoming presumption, though both seem to take the same course. My anxiety has led me from the depth of this melancholy retreat (which, however, the King's goodness and yours renders more quiet to me) to interfere by obtruding my poor opinions on a person whom I confess and must feel to be, no less by nature than by situation, much more capable of judging than I am.

"I have the honour to be, with the most perfect respect and attachment, &c.,

"EDM. BURKE."

Both France and England in this year were enduring great distress, even apart from the war which they waged against each other. There was the crash of paper credit in France. There was the pressure of heavy taxes in England. But moreover both nations at this time suffered grievously from dearth. The havoc of war had laid waste great part of the corn districts on the Vistula and Rhine, and the harvest of 1794 had proved scanty in other parts of Europe. Thus at Paris "Bread, Bread!" became the favourite watch-word both of the poorer classes and of all who desired to overthrow the existing Government. In England the price of provisions continued to rise; there was severe distress through the winter, and in the spring

many a dangerous riot. Thus at Birmingham in the month of June a mob of a thousand people gathered before a bakehouse and mill, which they proceeded to break open and plunder, crying "A large loaf! Are we to be starved to death?" It was necessary to call in the military force, and the disturbance could not be quelled without the lamentable loss of one life. Other disturbances, similar in kind, though less in degree, took place in Coventry, Nottingham, and other towns, and there was one upon the Sussex coast where the Oxfordshire Militia was stationed, and in which men from that regiment joined.

In July there were tumults in London arising from another provocation, or at least putting forth another plea. There was the cry of illegal detention at the recruiting, or as they were called, the crimping houses, and two of these were on two separate evenings attacked by a large mob. The doors were burst open and the furniture was burnt in the streets, while another band seized the opportunity to break, as the newspapers reported, the windows of Mr. Pitt in Downing Street; but further mischief was prevented by the timely arrival of the City Associations and the Lambeth volunteers, besides a party of the Royal Horse Guards. No lives were lost, but several persons were wounded and others trampled down.

The newspaper paragraphs of the attack in Downing Street gave some alarm to Lady Chatham at Burton. She addressed to her son an anxious inquiry, and he wrote at once to re-assure her.

"MY DEAR MOTHER, "Holwood, July 18, 1795.

"I have this moment received your letter, just in time to save the post by the return of the messenger. I take shame to myself for not reflecting how much a mob is magnified by report; but that which visited my window with a single pebble was really so young and so little versed in its business, that it hardly merited the notice of a newspaper. The ceremony has not been repeated since, and when I left town yesterday afternoon there was reason to believe that the disposition to disturbance which has appeared in some parts of the town was over, at least for the present. If it should revive, the precautions taken will, I am sure, prevent any serious mischief.

"This wind must soon bring accounts from Brittany, for which one must wait with anxious impatience, though with every reason to hope that they will be good. When I parted with my brother yesterday afternoon, he had not quite fixed his day of setting out. I wish I could see a nearer prospect of fixing mine.

"In great haste, as you well see,

"Your dutiful and affectionate

"W. PITT."

It is plain that the real roots at this time of the popular dissatisfaction were first the high price of provisions, and secondly the unprosperous conduct of the war. But the flame which had sprung from high prices was industriously fanned by the friends of French principles in England. The Corresponding Society again reared its head. The London press again poured forth a volley of publications—from pamphlets down to broad-sheets or placards—levelled at the Government

in Church and State, and arraigning it as the cause of the distress. In fairness it should be acknowledged that the great majority which took part in these publications, or in the subsequent proceedings, desired to assail only what they had been taught to consider as abuses of the system. They had no wish to strike at the root either of the social order or of the Christian faith. Nevertheless there were some among them, and those not very few, willing and eager to go the extremest length. There was, above all, Thomas Paine, who had now returned to England, having been cast into prison and most narrowly escaped the Guillotine during the sway of Robespierre. His own danger had not sobered him, nor yet all the scenes of woe which he had beheld. On the contrary, his great object seemed to be to bring England into the same condition, civil and religious, as under the Reign of Terror in France. The worst and most unbridled of all his publications—the "Age of Reason"—was sent forth at this critical time.

On the 29th of June, in the midst of the riots through the kingdom, a public meeting was convened by the Corresponding Society, and held in St. George's Fields. There many thousands assembled. A vehement declaimer, Mr. John Gale Jones, was placed in the Chair. As a kind of symbol, biscuits were distributed, embossed on one side with the words "Freedom and Plenty, or Slavery and Want." Addresses to the nation and to the King were moved and carried, as also a string of Resolutions. In these they predicted, very much in the style of Barère, that "the voice of Reason, like the roaring of the Nemean Lion, shall issue even from the

cavern's mouth." They demanded annual Parliaments and universal suffrage as the undoubted rights of the people. They deplored the high price of provisions, which they ascribed entirely to the present cruel and unnecessary war; the only remedy for this and other ills being immediately "to acknowledge the brave French Republic, and to obtain a speedy and lasting peace." They voted thanks to Citizens Erskine and Gibbs for their eloquent defence of the prisoners in the recent trials, and thanks also to Citizen Earl Stanhope and Citizen Sheridan for showing them that they had "one honest man in each House of Parliament." It is clear from this last vote that Sheridan was at this time considered to go much greater lengths in his politics than did his coadjutors Fox and Grey.[3]

Up nearly to this time it had been hoped that a plentiful harvest might remove the main cause of suffering and distress. But notwithstanding the mid-summer season, we are assured that intense cold set in on the 18th of June. This in the first place destroyed the sheep and lambs, more especially on the open plains. It was computed that in Wiltshire not less than one-fourth of the flocks had perished.[4]

But this was not all. The inclement weather continued, and exerted its influence on the arable as on the pasture lands. The inferior kinds of grain were indeed not deficient, and barley, above all, was reaped in abun-

[3] A full account of these proceedings, and of the later ones on the same side, is to be found in the History of Two Acts, &c., as published in 1796. See especially pp. 90–108.

[4] Ann. Register, 1795; Chronicle, p. 27.

dance; but as regards wheat there was a second scanty harvest. The price of wheat, which in February had been at the high rate for those times of 58*s.* a quarter, rose in August to the famine price of 108*s.*, and in September was still at 78*s.*

Notwithstanding the alarms of this period, Pitt was enabled in the course of September to pass a few days with his mother at Burton Pynsent. He addressed a lively letter to her on the very day of his return.

"Downing Street, Sept. 30, 1795.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"The engagements I found on my arrival leave me just time for one line to say that I brought the spoils of the Commerce table safe last night to Bagshot, and reached town this morning as I intended, after a journey very successful, and rendered very pleasant by the recollection of all the comfort and satisfaction of the few days preceding it. Accounts from Burton will, I hope, soon give me the pleasure of knowing that you remain at least as well as I left you. You will probably have received by this time a full account of the naval campaign from Lord Bridport, whom I met on the road, and found disposed to complain a little of the length of his cruise, but looking, as I thought, much the better for it. Pray remember me kindly to all your companions, among whom Eliot, I reckon, is by this time one. "Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

At nearly the same time Pitt wrote a letter to his friend the Speaker, which closed with the following words:—

"Sunday, Oct. 4, 1795.

. . . . . "I am still sanguine that the line we talked over will bring us speedily to a prosperous issue. I am going next Thursday for a week or ten days to Walmer, and hope to return with my Budget prepared to be opened before Christmas; and if that goes off tolerably well, it will give us peace before Easter.

"Ever yours,

"W. P."

But although Mr. Pitt desired to calm his mother's anxieties, and although he might look hopefully to the prospects of the foreign conflict — expecting to awe France into peace by the magnitude of his preparations —he viewed in truth the internal state of England at this time with deep anxiety. It was his opinion that unless a strong arm were extended, the people might be hurried by a temporary frenzy to excesses not far unlike to those of France. Only a few weeks from this time, as he was supping at his own house in company with two close friends—Mornington and Wilberforce—he let fall this expression: "My head would be off in six months were I to resign."[5]

In this anxious and perturbed condition of the labouring classes, it seemed to Mr. Pitt and to his colleagues that Parliament should be called together at an early period to consider every practicable measure of relief. The Recess had only begun on the 27th of June, and was allowed to continue no longer than the 29th of October.

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[5] Diary of Wilberforce, Nov. 16, 1795.

On the 26th, three days before the intended opening of the Session, another Meeting, under the direction of the Corresponding Society, was held in a wide open space with a tavern and tea-garden called Copenhagen House. It was said, though no doubt with much exaggeration, that no less than one hundred and fifty thousand persons flocked together.[6] Mr. Thelwall, Mr. Gale Jones, and other orators made inflammatory speeches; and divers Resolutions, calling for "execration" on the present Ministers, and demanding Universal Suffrage with Annual Parliaments, were declared to be passed.

[6] See the History of Two Acts, &c., p. 98.

CHAPTER XXI.

1795.

Congress at Basle — French advantages in the West Indies — The Maroon war — English conquests in Asia and Africa — Projected descent on the western shores of France — The Chouans — De Puisaye — Landing at Quiberon — Fatal inaction — Rout and distress of the Royalists — Executions — Comte d'Artois — New Constitution proclaimed in France — Insurrection in Paris — Campaign upon the Rhine — Depreciation of Assignats — Meeting of Parliament — Attack upon the King — Debates on the Address — Measures to alleviate scarcity and to repress sedition — The Duke of Bedford and Lord Lauderdale — Pitt's desire for peace.

DURING the spring and summer of 1795 there was for the most part a lull in the military operations. The French rulers seemed to be satisfied with the rapid conquest of Holland and the formal annexation of the Belgic provinces. They listened to overtures of peace from several Powers, and opened a Congress for further negotiations at Basle. At home they were mainly intent on framing a new and less democratic Constitution —on pacifying La Vendée—and on crushing the insurrectionary movements of the Jacobins.

Of all the Princes who had declared war against the French Republic, the first to conclude peace was the Grand-Duke of Tuscany. The treaty between them was signed at Paris on the 9th of February. On the 5th of April there followed the signature at Basle of a peace with Prussia. By that treaty, far from honourable to the Court of Berlin, the French remained in full possession of their conquests to the left of the

Rhine. Another compact, also signed at Basle, a few weeks afterwards, stipulated the neutrality of the north of Germany. On the 12th of June the King of Sweden acceded to the Peace of Basle, and the same city on the 22nd of July beheld the conclusion of a separate treaty with the King of Spain. By this last the French Republic agreed to restore all its conquests beyond the Pyrenees, while the Court of Madrid in return gave up its rights to the Spanish portion of the isle of St. Domingo.

On the other hand the English diplomacy was not inactive. The Court of Vienna was certainly gratified, and perhaps stimulated, by a new Convention of Subsidy, and great efforts were made to obtain the active co-operation of the Court of Petersburg. There was even signed a Triple Alliance, less, however, for use than for show.

The nominal cession of the Spanish half of St. Domingo was by no means the only advantage gained by the French this year in the West Indies. Victor Hugues at Guadeloupe displayed a true Jacobin energy. Turning his views of conquest to the English islands, he succeeded in kindling the flame of revolt among the negroes, the Maroons, and the Caribs. With their aid the French gained possession of St. Lucia and St. Vincent's. In Grenada and Dominica their attacks, though at first successful, were finally repulsed. We might almost fancy that the scene lay in Western Europe during the days of Robespierre, as we read of the butchery of defenceless prisoners, and the violation of enemies' graves—of red caps and tricoloured cockades

—of flags inscribed with "Liberty, Equality, or Death," —and of proclamations against "the vile satellites of George—those infamous promoters of every kind of robbery! For rob they must," adds the discerning Victor Hugues; "that is the very principle of the English military service. In such a corrupt government no preferment can be obtained but for money, and money must be had, no matter by what means." The Declaration of Victor Hugues and his two colleagues at Guadeloupe, from which I extract this passage, is dated as follows: "Port of Liberty, the 3rd day of Ventose, or 21st of February according to the style of slaves, in the third year of the French Republic, One and Indivisible."

Jamaica at the same period was exposed to constant alarm from the desultory but destructive skirmishes of the Maroons. These, the descendants of the early settlers in the Spanish times, were no slaves, but on the contrary had maintained their freedom in the mountain fastnesses towards the centre of the island, their chief settlement being called Trelawney Town. There were now some grievances on the part of the English, and some lures on the part of the French. On these the Maroons had at once recourse to arms. In vain did the Earl of Balcarres, as Governor of Jamaica, make every effort to reduce them. He was foiled again and again by their nimble escape and rapid re-appearance. Then, in concert with the local Legislature, he adopted a resource which the precedent of the Spaniards is wholly insufficient to excuse. They sent over to Cuba and imported a hundred blood-hounds with thirty huntsmen

to trace and pursue the fugitive Maroons. It does not seem, however, that this savage expedient, though resolved on and prepared, was actually employed. Some reinforcements from England arriving at this very period, the Maroons grew inclined to peace, and a treaty was concluded.

In Asia and in Africa during the course of this year our arms were also felt. The subjugation of Holland by the French led the English to reduce the ancient colonies of that Republic. Ceylon, the Moluccas, and some others surrendered without a blow. To the Cape of Good Hope we sent a small expedition, the ships commanded by Sir George Elphinstone, and the troops by Sir Alured Clarke. No more than sixteen hundred men of all arms could be set on shore, and the Dutch forces were much larger, but consisting in great part of burgher guards and Hottentots. Their irregular resistance was quickly overpowered, and so this important colony was gained.

But the hopes of Mr. Pitt at this time principally turned to a projected descent on the western shores of France. In La Vendée, ever since the fatal rout of Savenay, the civil war had smouldered rather than burned, and the Republic had lately concluded terms of pacification first with Charette and afterwards with Stofflet. It was believed, however, that a new insurrection would readily burst forth, including even the reconciled chiefs, as soon as a British fleet with a body of land forces on board should appear in sight of the French coasts. And meanwhile the civil war had spread on the north of the Loire. There had been to some

extent a popular rising in Brittany. The insurgents of that province were known by the name of *les Chouans*, a word of doubtful origin, but said to be corrupted from *chat-huant*, the night owl, to denote their secret signal in their nightly expeditions.

The name was not the only difference between the insurgents of La Bretagne and those of La Vendée. In the latter it had been the revolt of a brave and loyal peasantry stirred beyond endurance by the cruel wrongs of their priesthood and their King. In the former the peasants were no less brave and no less loyal. But with these there was a large admixture of outlaws and marauders, ever ready for some deed of rapine or of private vengeance. Upon the whole then the insurgents north of the Loire did not muster *en masse*, to form an army, but prowled about in small bands for some special object. It was not so much a province which had risen as a province which was ready to rise.

In the ranks of Les Chouans the leading influence belonged to Comte Joseph de Puisaye. He had been at one time a member of the National Assembly, and was distinguished both for conduct and courage. Soon discerning that the bands of Brittany could not of themselves achieve any great Royalist end, he had fixed his hopes on the co-operation of England, and with that view, bidding his friends bide their time, himself repaired to London in the autumn of 1794. Mr. Pitt, who has been accused of coldness and distrust to the Emigrants in general, showed to the Comte de Puisaye both esteem and confidence. De Puisaye became the ruling spirit of the intended enterprise, and his papers

even now afford the best materials for its history. Having been bequeathed by him to the British Museum, they were received by that institution in the year 1829. They form no less than one hundred and eighteen volumes, comprising some few letters of Mr. Pitt.

The plan of M. de Puisaye was to conduct an English squadron to the coast of Brittany—that squadron to have on board some French Royalist troops, and at their head a French Prince of the Blood. In furtherance of these views the English Government had taken into its pay several bodies of French Emigrants—now grievously reduced in numbers—that had lately been serving on the Rhine. An active officer, M. d'Hervilly, enlisted some more from among the fugitives of Toulon and the Breton prisoners of war. On the whole there were ready to embark upwards of three thousand men, besides a second division of about twelve hundred which had not yet arrived from Germany. The English Government, in addition to its earlier advances, supplied ten thousand guineas in gold for the military chest, and there had been fabricated by order of M. de Puisaye a large number of Assignats, distinguished by a private mark and designed for a ready circulation.

To obtain a Prince of the Blood might seem a much easier, but was in truth a more difficult task. The exiled Royal Family of France was at this time much divided. Monsieur had retired from the Rhine as the Republican armies advanced, and had fixed his residence in the states of Venice, at Verona. He continued to take the title of Regent during the minority and the captivity of his nephew, Louis the Seventeenth; and he sent

forth as his Envoys to the various capitals men of the highest rank among the Emigrant nobility, as the Duke d'Harcourt to London, and the Duke d'Havré to Madrid. With divers malcontents at Paris he carried on an active correspondence, and they had formed themselves into a secret Committee for the management of his affairs. The Comte d'Artois, on the other hand, was ever moving from Court to Court or from camp to camp. Thus, for instance, he had travelled to Petersburg, where the Empress Catherine showed him great marks of honour, but gave him no substantial aid. He did not by any means hold the same opinions nor yet correspond with the same persons as his brother. Detached from both of these, the Prince of Condé had still under his command some three thousand Emigrants in arms, and continued to wage war upon the Rhine with more spirit than success.

It was the wish both of Mr. Pitt and of M. de Puisaye that the Comte d'Artois should lead the projected expedition. The Prince did not refuse, but made difficulties, and hung back. Many of the officers around him wished to land in La Vendée rather than in Brittany, and seemed to think it beneath them to go night-owling—*de chouanner*—as they said.

It was also wished that, except as regarding the Comte d'Artois, the strictest secrecy might be observed. But this secrecy, though absolutely essential to success, gave great umbrage to the other chief Emigrants. Still more did it offend the manifold intriguers who undertook to manage the Royalist cause at Paris. As for these last, indeed, they appeared far less intent to

achieve a Restoration than to prevent its being achieved by any other hands except their own. The directions which they sent to the chief men in Brittany, both before the landing of the armament and after it, were designed to thwart, and did thwart, its objects in the highest degree.

The English squadron for this enterprise was intrusted to Sir John Borlase Warren, a tried and excellent seaman. There were put on board large supplies of all kinds, not merely every requisite for the Royalist troops embarked, but eighteen thousand uniforms and stands of arms for the insurgents who were expected to join them. Before the middle of June the preparations in England were complete. The second division of the Emigrant regiments, commanded by De Sombreuil, had not yet arrived; still less His Royal Highness of Artois. But any further delay, in order to await them, would have forfeited all prospect of surprise and success. The armament accordingly set sail, M. de Puisaye having the supreme direction, and M. d'Hervilly the immediate command of the troops. There were also a Breton prelate, the Bishop of Dol, and about forty gentlemen of rank, who served as volunteers.

The place for landing which had been selected, but which had been kept most carefully secret, was the peninsula of Quiberon, in front of the bay of the same name. That bay, it was thought, would afford to the English ships a secure anchorage, and that peninsula to the French troops a commanding station. The expedition began well. Nearly off Brest it was joined

by the squadron of Lord Bridport, and fell in with the enemy's fleet under Villaret Joyeuse, when Lord Bridport, by superior manœuvring, cut off and captured Le Formidable and Le Tigre, each of eighty guns, and L'Alexandre of seventy-four.

On the 27th of June the Emigrant chiefs with their soldiers were safely disembarked near the Druid stones of Carnac, and within the bay of Quiberon. They stepped on shore full of exultation, rejoicing at their return to their native land, and not foreboding the dismal fate which impended over them. The news of their landing flew like wildfire on every side, and the Chouans eagerly flocked in to swell their ranks. Within three days they were joined by ten thousand men. It was desired by M. de Puisaye to lose no time, to seize the favourable moment, to advance rapidly upon Vannes and Rennes, and to raise the whole of Brittany in arms. Here, if ever, was a case in which boldness was the truest wisdom.

But more timid counsels prevailed. Though the commission of the British Government to D'Hervilly had been limited to the period of the voyage, that officer continued to claim the direction of the troops. He refused to obey the superior orders of Puisaye, and rendered necessary an appeal to the Ministers in London. Meanwhile no advance was made. After some days, however, Puisaye prevailed upon his colleague to attack the small fort Penthièvre, which commanded the entrance to the peninsula of Quiberon. The garrison of a few hundred men surrendered after a slight resistance. M. de Puisaye then brought over his

troops to the peninsula, and landed his stores from the ships, occupying in this manner a strong position of defence, while the Chouans took up a forward line beyond the fort on the main land.

The injury of the inaction thus enforced upon Puisaye was not merely to be measured by the loss of time to himself, or by the gain of time to his enemies. It gave leisure for discord and jealousy to spring up in his own ranks. The Emigrant officers could not always conceal their scorn of the peasant chiefs, nor the peasant chiefs their suspicion of the Emigrant officers. "Where," said the Chouans, "is that Prince of the Blood who had been promised us? Where is that rapid advance of which M. de Puisaye spoke? Is it possible that the English are striving only for some conquest to themselves?"

The command for the Republic in this province had been vested in General Hoche, a young and most able officer, the same who was designed as head of the projected expedition to Ireland. At the time when the Royalists landed he had under him only some five thousand troops, but, through the leisure left him, he found means gradually to double his numbers; and he acted throughout with singular spirit and vigour. Suddenly assailing the advanced position of the Chouans, he put them to the rout, driving them in utter confusion beyond Fort Penthièvre into the peninsula of Quiberon. There they found themselves cooped up side by side with the Emigrant troops in a narrow space, and with scanty food.

Puisaye and D'Hervilly, however, made a vigorous effort to retrieve this check. On the 16th of July, at

daybreak, they marched out from Fort Penthièvre, and in their turn assailed the troops of Hoche. But they did not succeed. D'Hervilly himself was mortally wounded; the signals were misunderstood; a body of Chouans, which had been sent round to the enemy's rear, failed to arrive; and valour was in vain. Great numbers of the Royalists were slain; the rest, protected by a sharp fire from the English gun-boats, were driven back to the tongue of land.

Meanwhile there had come from England a second smaller squadron, bringing M. de Sombreuil and his division of eleven hundred men, and bringing also a full confirmation of the superior powers which had been vested in M. de Puisaye. These succours, these powers, all arrived too late. M. de Sombreuil at once disembarked his men, eager as they were for action, but they were only in time to be partakers of the final disaster which ensued.

On the first taking of Fort Penthièvre, M. d'Hervilly had induced the Republican garrison to enlist in his own regiment. The consequences of this imprudent step may be readily guessed. No sooner had Fortune seemed to declare against M. de Puisaye than these new-made Royalists went over to General Hoche. In concert with them the General, during the night of the 20th of July, made a sudden attack upon the fort and carried it sword in hand. Next morning, the 21st, he pursued his advantage against the remaining Emigrant troops, now scattered along the tongue of land. Inferior as they were in numbers, harassed as they had been by the night assault, they could offer no effectual

resistance; and as it chanced, the sea was rolling high, and greatly impeded the English boats and ships in their efforts to aid them.

Grievous indeed was the scene that now displayed itself. There was some of the best blood of France—the descendants of its Knights and Barons in the olden time, of the men full of chivalrous daring, of the men who had marched to free the Holy Sepulchre beneath the banner of Godfrey de Bouillon, or who, in Poitou and in Picardy, had striven face to face and hand to hand with Edward the Black Prince—pressed together on the desolate beach of Quiberon, with stormy waves behind and implacable bayonets before them—with no choice but between the pitiless sea and their still more pitiless foe! Many of the officers in despair threw themselves upon their own swords. Many others were seen to plunge into the raging surf breast-high, or even neck-high, as they sought to gain the already overburdened boats. Yet even thus their heads above the water afforded a sure mark to the musketry of Hoche, while many more were swept down for ever by the angry seas. Some few, on the contrary, succeeded and caught hold of one or other of the fishing barks that continued to hover off the coast. But their fate was, if possible, more dreadful still. The boatmen were dismayed at the number of the barks which, as loaded with many of the fugitives, they had lately seen to sink; and acting, as they thought, in self preservation, they hewed off with their cutlasses the hands of the drowning wretches that clung to them. Seldom in any war has there been a scene of more unmingled horror and distress.

It is painful to find, two days after this total rout of the Royalists, Mr. Pitt wholly unsuspicious of it, and, on the contrary, writing to congratulate M. de Puisaye upon their success. I will here insert his letter, as derived from the Puisaye papers, mainly for the sake of showing the correctness of his French.

" MONSIEUR, " Downing Street, le 23 Juillet, 1795.

" J'ai appris avec la plus vive satisfaction par vos différents rapports (dont le dernier nous a été remis hier par le Capitaine Bertie) tout ce que vous et vos braves compatriotes ont fait depuis votre arrivée en Bretagne pour la cause que vous soutenez avec tant de gloire. J'espère que vous aurez lieu d'être content du zèle et de l'activité qu'on ne cessera d'employer ici pour seconder vos efforts. A moins que le vent n'a contrarié l'expédition, un renfort de trois mille troupes Britanniques et des secours qui pourront suppléer à vos plus pressants besoins doivent être déjà près de vos côtes. Nous faisons tout ce qui dépend de nous d'accélérer l'envoi de Milord Moira avec une force beaucoup plus considérable. Soyez persuadé, Monsieur, que nous sentons toute l'importance de la crise actuelle, et que nous regardons la réussite de votre entreprise comme le grand moyen de terminer les malheurs de la France, et de retablir la sûreté et la tranquillité de l'Europe.

" Croyez toujours, Monsieur, aux sentimens d'attachement et de considération avec lesquels je ne cesserai d'être,

" Monsieur, &c.,

" W. PITT.

" J'ai donné l'ordre de fournir les fonds pour l'achat des chevaux que vous demanderez."

But let me hasten to the close. Some of the chiefs, as M. de Puisaye, did find means to reach the English squadron; many more, as M. de Sombreuil, were compelled to remain on that fatal shore. These, with about a thousand Emigrants, laid down their arms. It is said that there was some kind of capitulation with General Humbert—that a verbal promise was made to them that their lives should be spared on their surrender. This was most earnestly asserted by Sombreuil even in his dying moments, but was no less earnestly denied by Hoche.

It cannot be said, however, that the young General-in-Chief for the Republic took any part in the matter of the prisoners which misbecame so brave a man. If he made no effort to save them at this period, he is quite clear of any step to precipitate their fate. In truth he considered that fate as beyond his sphere, and he did no more than refer it to the decision of the Government at Paris.

Many considerations might have disposed that Government to mercy. It had overthrown Robespierre, and ought not to tread in his steps. Unhappily, for some time past, it had been seeking to conciliate the Men of Blood. It was afraid of being denounced as favourable in secret to the Bourbons. It was afraid, according to the felicitous phrase of that era, lest it should be *soupçonné d'être suspect.* It often happens in Revolutionary times, that men are supposed to show a ferocious energy who in truth have become cruel only because they were not courageous. Under these circumstances, the ruling men of the Ninth of

Thermidor resolved to put in force one of the most sanguinary Decrees of the Reign of Terror—that every Emigrant taken with arms in his hands should be put to death without further trial. They sent orders into Brittany to execute this law upon all who had surrendered, excepting only the recent Republican prisoners, who were supposed to be enlisted against their will.

The just horror inspired by this sentence was by no means confined to its victims. Many of the common soldiers in the Republican army showed a far more humane and civilized spirit than did their political chiefs. They assisted, or connived at, the escape of as many single prisoners as they could. Still upon the whole the orders of the Convention had to be obeyed. A band of captives was led forth, drawn out in order, and shot; at their head M. de Sombreuil and the Bishop of Dol. Next day the same execution was repeated, and next day again. There was no intermission until fifteen days had passed, and upwards of seven hundred prisoners had perished. In vain did Hoche write word more than once to the Convention that his soldiers were weary of being used as butchers.[1] No sign of mercy came until after the executions were completed.

To this day the scene of these executions is still pointed out to the passing traveller—a meadow near the small town of Auray; and to this day the peasants call it *le champ des martyrs*. It is marked at present by a Grecian temple as a monument, the first stone of

[1] "Hoche et le Conventionnel Mathieu écrivirent plusieurs fois que les soldats se lassaient de faire le métier de bourreaux." (De Barante, Hist. de la Convention, vol. v. p. 63, ed. 1853.)

which was laid by the Duchess of Angoulême in 1823.[2]

At the very time when this ill-fated expedition had been ready to set out from the ports of England, there died at Paris the young Prince in whose name it was prepared. The nominal King, Louis the Seventeenth, expired on the 8th of June, 1795. He was only eleven years of age, brought down to his early grave by a course of systematic ill-usage, sure as the musketry of Quiberon; by bodily privations, and by anguish of mind. At the news of his decease Monsieur assumed the title of Louis the Eighteenth, King of France and of Navarre—an empty title, only to be realised after nineteen years.

On retiring from the bay of Quiberon, the wretched survivors of the expedition took shelter in the storm-beaten islet of Houat. There, when all was over, they were joined by His Royal Highness le Comte d'Artois. But Puisaye, chafed by his disaster, and harassed by the recriminations of his comrades, threw himself almost alone upon the coast of Brittany, there to rejoin the Chouan bands. Had His Royal Highness followed the example—had he landed without delay on some point of the French coast—the name and the presence of a French Prince might still have wrought wonders for his cause.

Instead of such wise temerity, the Comte d'Artois, on receiving further succours from England, took posses-

[2] Mr. Mounteney Jephson, in his lively and entertaining 'Walking Tour,' describes this temple as "a dreadfully ugly building" (p. 198, ed. 1859). On the architrave is carved: *Gallia moerens posuit.*

sion of the island of Belleisle, and there remained at gaze for upwards of six weeks. He received divers deputations from both Brittany and La Vendée, and employed himself in discussing a great variety of plans. Even the worst of these, if at once adopted, would have been far preferable to the best so long delayed. Certainly Charles Comte d'Artois bore but little resemblance to Prince Charles Edward Stuart; and although with adherents equally devoted, "the Ninety-five" of France can never be ranked with "the Forty-five" of Scotland.

General Hoche during this whole period had been unremitting in his exertions. He had drawn together no less than forty-four thousand troops for the protection of La Vendée. When therefore at last, towards the middle of October, the Comte d'Artois showed some readiness to land on the Vendéan coast, and to join with his Emigrants the peasantry under Charette, there were obstacles that might have daunted even a much more enterprising chief. In the face of such obstacles the most prudent course seemed to be to do nothing at all. Much against the wish of the officers, both Emigrant and English, the Prince relinquished all idea of a landing, and sailed back with the squadron to England.

The chief result of this abortive enterprise was to draw down ruin on the principal Royalist chiefs. Charette had risen once again in arms on the project of co-operation from the French Prince and the English squadron, but being left alone, was quickly overpowered and taken prisoner. Nearly the same was the fate of Stofflet in another district. Both being brought to

rapid trial were condemned and executed, the one at Nantes, the other at Angers.

Thus ended this most unfortunate expedition. Complete as had been the failure, the causes of that failure seemed plain and open to view. Not so, however, have they seemed to all writers. Several, and above all Frenchmen from the most opposite parties, differing on every other point, have alleged an occult cause as the true one. They trace the whole to the fiendish malignity of the English Minister. They declare that Pitt secretly wished the expedition to fail, and contrived it accordingly. He hated all Frenchmen, Republicans and Royalists alike, and desired nothing so much as to see them destroy each other with their own hands. For this purpose he had sought and found a fitting instrument in M. de Puisaye, who was in reality a traitor bought by the gold of perfidious Albion.[3] It is of course unnecessary to waste a single word in refutation of these charges. It may seem as unnecessary to record them. Yet they deserve to find a place in History as a striking instance how far, under certain circumstances of party hatred, the noblest minds may be traduced.

The news of the disaster at Quiberon reached Mr. Pitt on the 1st of August, as did other ill tidings two days afterwards. On both occasions we find him write as follows to Lord Chatham.

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[3] See for instance the Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel, vol. v. p. 362; and the Règne de Frédéric Guillaume, par Ségur, vol. iii. pp. 79 and 225.

"Downing Street, August 1, 1795.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I have wished to write to you every day these three days, but have not been able to find time. In the mean time you will have had the mortification of seeing the unexpected bad accounts from Brittany, the public reports of which, though somewhat exaggerated, are in substance but too true. The Gazette of to-day (which I have desired to be sent to you) contains a short statement of the result of our information, as far as relates to this unfortunate event. We have, on the other hand, reason to believe that everything has been going on as well as could be wished in the interior; and although their spirits must for a time be damped by this misfortune, there is the greatest reason to hope that if we can establish some other point of communication, our disappointment may soon be repaired.

"Lord Moira remains eager for the enterprise, and I hope will be enabled to make a fresh attempt with a very considerable force in a very short time.

"By Paris papers, it appears from an official report to the Convention, that on the 13th of last month the French fleet of eighteen sail of the line fell in with ours of twenty-three, south of Hières: by their own account they got away as fast [as] they could, and seem very proud of having reached Fréjus Bay, though not without the loss of the Alcide, which they represent to have been burnt. I hope you have found all well at Burton. Pray give my duty to my mother, and love to Lady Chatham.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

"Downing Street, August 3, 1795.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"In addition to the bad news which was the subject of my last letter, I am very sorry to have to tell you that we have received from Paris accounts of peace being concluded with Spain at Basle on the 22nd of July: the terms are the restitution of all conquests, made on Spain in Europe, in exchange for the cession to France of the Spanish part of St. Domingo. This varies so much the whole state [of] things, both from setting at liberty so large an additional French force, and from the impression which it may produce on other Powers, that it makes it a new question whether any British force can, without too great a risk, be hazarded on the Continent of France. I incline to think that our plan must now be changed, and that the only great part must be in the West Indies, where I trust enough may yet be gained to counterbalance the French successes in Europe.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

The Government of France at this time underwent an entire change. A new Constitution was proclaimed, called "the Constitution of the Year Three," from its date in the Republican calendar. Instead of a single Chamber as heretofore, two were instituted, the one designed as a Senate to be called "the Council of Ancients," and the other "the Council of Five Hundred." The executive power was entrusted to a Council of Five, with the title of Directors, one of them to retire every year. These chiefs took up their residence in the palace of the Luxembourg, gave audiences seated

on gilt chairs, and affected on all occasions a kind of semi-regal state. There were then or shortly afterwards among them men of most undoubted ability and patriotism, such as Carnot. But in general it may be said of this new Government that it showed the vices of the old Monarchy far more than those of the recent Republic. The civilians in office at this period were not Men of Blood; they did not seek to revive the Reign of Terror, but they were for the most part corrupt, dissolute, and slothful; either ill-qualified for public affairs, or intent upon personal objects.

In framing this new system, the members of the Convention had by no means forgotten their own special interests. They had passed a Decree that in the new Legislature two thirds should consist of men who had already sat in the Convention, and that only one-third should be new. That measure, though it might spring from selfish motives, had strong grounds of public utility to recommend it. There was little opposition to it in the greater part of France. But at Paris it was most fiercely resented, both by the old Republicans and the secret Royalists; and at the beginning of October these parties combining rose in open insurrection.

The Government and the Convention had been long forewarned, and were in some degree at least prepared. They had brought into Paris a body of five thousand chosen troops, and as their chief they relied on General Menou. But Menou at the decisive hour showed himself feeble, faltering, and unequal to his post. There seemed some prospect that the insurgents might prevail. Several of the newly named Directors began to turn

pale and look aghast. Barras, who took the lead amongst them at this juncture, bid them fear nothing. "I have the very man we want," he cried, "a little Corsican officer whom I knew at Toulon." And with these words he introduced to them the future Emperor Napoleon.

General Bonaparte, on being invested with the chief command under Barras, justified the choice by his promptitude and skill. He dealt with the insurgents of Paris as with the insurgents of Toulon. He had forty pieces of artillery, rescued only just in time, and he well knew how to dispose them. As the "Sections," for so they called themselves, advanced to invest the hall of the Convention, a tremendous fire both of musketry and grape-shot was opened on their long and dense columns in the narrow streets. After a sharp conflict they were put to flight, utterly dispersed, and successively disarmed. This victory, which secured the power of the newly-named Directory, took place on the 5th of October, and is commonly known from its date in the Republican calendar as the "Treize Vendémiaire."[1]

The campaign upon the Rhine had not opened till the month of September. Then General Jourdan crossed the river near Dusseldorf, and General Pichegrü near Mannheim. But the former chief was soon repulsed by General Clerfait, and the latter by General Wurmser. Both with some disadvantage found it necessary to repass the Rhine, while Clerfait by a bril-

[1] A clear and excellent account of this insurrection is given by Napoleon himself in the Memoirs dictated to Comte Montholon. See vol. iii. pp. 65–75, ed. 1823.

liant manœuvre made himself master of the lines before Mayence, and raised the blockade of that important city. All this while there was a latent hope of a far more considerable gain. The Prince of Condé had made some secret overtures to Pichegru by means of Fauche Borel, a bookseller from Neuchâtel; and the General, after some coy demur, was found well inclined to the Royalist cause. He was willing, if possible, to engage his army with him, to assume the white cockade, and to march back upon Paris; but he would by no means give up in the first instance the fort of Huningen, as Condé required. So there was no actual agreement concluded, and still less any active co-operation begun.

A less secret source of hope to the enemies of the French Republic was at this time afforded. Her finances seemed on the very brink of ruin. So enormous was the depreciation of the Assignats she had issued, that in October, 1795, it was computed as seventy to one.[5] Indeed this national bankruptcy (for so in truth it may be termed) is ranked among the causes of the intended defection of Pichegru. He was fond of pleasure and expense, and his pay, when given in Assignats, amounted, even before the lowest point of depression, to less than two guineas a week.[6]

In England, as we have seen, the meeting of Parliament had been fixed for an early day—the 29th of October. On that day the combined effect of popular distress with democratic agitation was soon appa-

[5] Parl. Hist., vol. xxxii. p. 190.

[6] Thiers, Hist. Rév. Fran., vol. iv. p. 408.

rent. As the King went down in State to deliver his opening Speech, he found the loyal shouts which were wont to greet him exchanged for hootings and hisses. The cries were "Bread!" "Peace!" "No War!" "No Famine!" "No Pitt!" Some voices were even heard to utter "Down with George!" When His Majesty's coach came opposite the Ordnance, a pebble or bullet, proceeding as was supposed from an air-gun, struck the window glass, through which a small hole was broken. It was not improbably the realisation of that very conspiracy in the preceding year which the Opposition had derided under the nick-name of the "Pop-gun Plot."

Throughout this trying scene the King showed perfect composure and serenity. On entering the House of Peers he calmly said to the Chancellor, "My Lord, I have been shot at;" and he proceeded to read the Royal Speech in his usual clear and deliberate tones. On his way back there was a renewal of the former cries, and more than a renewal of the former violence. Stones were thrown, breaking the pannels and another window of the coach. And when the King quitted that State coach at St. James's Palace, and proceeded to Buckingham House in his private carriage, His Majesty being then almost without guards, found himself most closely beset by exasperated numbers. It was fortunate that some of the Horse Guards, who had been dismissed from duty, returned of their own accord and lent their timely aid.

With much good sense the King gave a speedy token that, notwithstanding such excesses, he felt that he could rely on the attachment of the great body of the

people. On the very next evening he went to Covent Garden Theatre accompanied by the Queen and three of the Princesses. The Royal party was received with a loud burst of applause, and the air of "God save the King" three times repeated.

In the House of Lords the insult to the Royal person was considered before any of the topics in the Royal Speech. Some witnesses to the fact were examined, and an Address moved by Lord Grenville, and afterwards concurred in by the Commons, expressed the indignation of both Houses at this "daring outrage." But so high had party-spirit risen at this time, that Lord Lansdowne in his place was heard to declare that this alleged attack was only "the alarm-bell to terrify the people into weak compliances. He thought it was a scheme planned and executed by Ministers themselves for the purpose of continuing their power!"[7]

On account of the new topic thus unexpectedly brought forward, the Peers postponed until the next night their consideration of the Speech from the Throne; but pending the Message from that House on the other subject, the Commons made the Royal Speech as usual their first matter of debate.

The Royal Speech on this occasion had expressed the King's satisfaction at the recent successes of the Austrians in Germany and Italy, but adding his hopes that there might soon arise in France a disposition to negotiate for general peace on just and suitable terms. It further stated that His Majesty had viewed with the

[7] Parl. Hist., vol. xxxii. p. 155.

greatest anxiety the very high price of grain, and the strong probability of an insufficient harvest. In the Commons the Address was seconded by a young Member speaking for the first time in that Assembly which at a later period he was to lead: this was the Hon. Robert Stewart, soon afterwards Lord Castlereagh. "Pitt spoke capitally and as distinct as possible on the main point"—that is a wish for peace—so writes Wilberforce. On the other side both Sheridan and Fox inveighed with their usual eloquence against the whole conduct of the war. With great force did Sheridan contrast the former proposal of Mr. Jenkinson for "a march to Paris" with our actual achievements on the coasts of Brittany and Poitou, "where," he said, "British blood indeed has not flowed, but British honour has bled at every pore!" And Fox, at the conclusion of his powerful invective, moved an amendment entreating, among other things, His Majesty "to reflect upon the evident impracticability of attaining in the present contest what have hitherto been considered as the objects of it." Pitt was more brief but not less masterly in the speech replying to both the Opposition chiefs, and on a division the amendment was rejected by a majority of four to one—240 votes against 59.

Next day in the House of Lords the same amendment which Fox had offered was moved, but with quite as little success, by Francis, Duke of Bedford. His Grace was grandson of the Minister who had signed the Peace of Paris, and having recently come of age after a long minority, began public life with much zeal as a

follower of Fox. He spoke often, and with considerable weight, in the House of Lords.

The attention of the Legislature was now directed upon two subjects of paramount importance—the measures to alleviate scarcity, and the measures to repress sedition.

As regards the former, Mr. Pitt brought forward the question so early as the 3rd of November. He proposed the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the causes of the high price of corn, and he gave at the same time an outline of the divers steps that he desired to take. He proposed to amend the law on the Assize of Bread, which up to that time was governed by the depositions periodically laid before the Lord Mayor of London. He proposed to prohibit the use of wheat flour in the manufacture of starch, and to clear away all obstructions in the transit of grain. He proposed that bakers should be no longer bound by law to make bread from wheat of the first quality, but should be authorised to use an admixture of inferior grain, as also perhaps of Indian corn and potatoes. Several experiments, said Mr. Pitt, had been already made, giving hopes that a mixed bread of this kind would be both nutritious and palatable. There had been an Act in the last Session prohibiting for a limited time the use of wheat in the distilleries, and this Act, at whatever loss to the revenue, might be renewed for another year. In like manner the King had been empowered last Session, for a limited time, to prohibit the exportation and allow the import duty-free of various kinds of food;

and this prerogative also might be again enacted. But as afterwards appeared, the Minister was prepared to go even farther, and to grant a bounty on the import of these much needed supplies.

The Report of the Committee when presented expressed a general concurrence in these views; and Acts of Parliament were passed accordingly. Mr. Fox, stated some doubts whether the bread from these mixed materials would prove sufficiently nutritious, but owned that he had nothing better to suggest, and indeed was but little at home on these financial or commercial topics. A bounty of twenty shillings was granted on the import of each quarter of wheat, and there were bounties in proportion on other articles of food.[8] But the Report of the Committee showed, that in addition to legislative measures, great advantage might ensue from private and voluntary efforts. An agreement which it recommended became of general adoption, pledging the persons who adopted it to reduce the consumption of wheat in their families by the use of mixed bread and the disuse of fine pastry.

Nor were pecuniary sacrifices wanting for the same benevolent object. The East India Company imported and disposed of greatly under cost several cargoes of rice, and the City of London gave bounties for the sale in Billingsgate market of cod and haddock at two-pence a pound. It is gratifying to add that by this timely combination of measures the object in view ap-

[8] See the scale, with an account of the other measures adopted on this subject, in Macpherson's History of Commerce, vol. iv. pp. 359–363.

pears to have been fully attained. The advance of public distress was arrested, and the price of wheat was restrained within moderate bounds.

The next most pressing subject was how sedition might be punished or prevented. A Royal Proclamation had been issued on the 31st of October, in pursuance of the wish expressed by both Houses in their joint Address, offering £1,000 as a reward to discover the perpetrators of any act by which the Royal person was endangered. But no such discovery ensued. It was never known by whom the air-gun was discharged, or the missile flung. Only one person, a journeyman printer named Kyd Wake, was tried before Lord Kenyon, and convicted of having hissed and hooted round the King's state-carriage, and having cried "Down with George!" He was sentenced to stand an hour in the pillory, and to be imprisoned for five years.

On the 4th of November there came forth a second Proclamation referring to the recent meetings in the open air—denouncing both the harangues and the publications which had tended to disturb the public peace—and calling on the magistrates to exert themselves to bring to justice any persons who might again offend. Expressions like these did not pass without comment from both sides. It was warmly maintained by Mr. Fox and by his friends that there was not the smallest connection between the outrageous acts at the opening of Parliament and the violent language in Copenhagen Fields. But far otherwise thought the nation at large. They considered the seditious language and the seditious acts

to stand to each other in the precise relation of cause and effect; and they expected from the King's Servants some more stringent measures for the public peace. Such also, in the eyes of Mr. Pitt and of his colleagues, was their own opinion of their duty. "It is notorious," said Lord Grenville, "that the evil we are seeking to correct has attained an alarming height—the most seditious papers circulated and the most inflammatory discourses delivered to public assemblies. To this is to be ascribed the outrage that has lately taken place. It is no longer the flimsy allegation of some imaginary grievance, or the slight pretext of a wish for Parliamentary Reform, that can be set up as the motive for such meetings. That thin veil has been lately torn away, and in the face of broad daylight an attempt has been made directly on the person of the Sovereign."

Such were the words of Lord Grenville when, on the 6th of November, he presented to the House of Lords a Bill defining and extending the Law of Treason. The old Statute of Edward the Third had looked mainly to attacks intending the King's death, but here were penalties also on attacks intending any bodily harm. It was further declared that any person who, by writing, preaching, or speaking, should stir up the people to hatred of His Majesty's person, and of the established Government and Constitution, should be liable to the penalties of a high misdemeanor, and on a second conviction might be transported for seven years.

Nor was this all. On the 10th of the same month Mr. Pitt laid before the House of Commons a Bill against seditious meetings. A summary power was

given to the magistrates to disperse such meetings, even by force if necessary, and a licence was required for houses, rooms, or fields where money was taken for admission to hear lectures or discourses. The duration of this Bill—as also of the last clauses in the former—was afterwards in Committee restricted to three years.

In common parlance these two measures were known as the "Treason" and the "Sedition" Bills. Taking them together, and laying aside what was no real matter of dispute, the increased security to the Royal Person, they were, no doubt, as the Opposition called them, an alarming infringement of the public liberties. The question is only how far such an infringement might be justified by a peril to the State more alarming still. "Say at once"—cried Mr. Fox, in a strain of most fervid eloquence, and on the very first night of the Sedition Bill—"say at once, that a free Constitution is no longer suitable to us; say at once, in a manly manner, that upon an ample review of the state of the world, a free Constitution is not fit for you; conduct yourselves at once as the senators of Denmark did; lay down your freedom, and acknowledge and accept of despotism. But do not mock the understandings and the feelings of mankind by telling the world that you are free—by telling me that if out of this House, for the purpose of expressing my sense of the public administration of this country, of the calamities which this war has occasioned, I state a grievance by petition, or make any declaration of my sentiments in a manner that a magistrate may think seditious, I am to be subjected to penalties hitherto unknown to the laws of

England. . . . . Did ever a free people meet so? Did ever a free state exist so? Good God Almighty! Sir, is it possible that the feelings of the people of this country should be thus insulted?"

These words were full of ardour, and no pains were spared to arouse an equal ardour in the people. The Whig Club met and protested with the Duke of Bedford in the Chair. The Corresponding Society met and did their best to dissemble their Republican tendencies, reprobating in strong terms the recent insults "offered to the person of the Chief Magistrate." There was a meeting of the inhabitants of Westminster in Palace Yard, with Mr. Fox as their Member presiding over them; it produced some angry speeches, and a petition to the House of Commons. There were meetings of the same kind at divers places both in England and in Scotland. At Edinburgh several vehement Resolutions were moved by Henry Erskine, the Dean of Faculty, and like his brother Thomas, of the highest forensic renown. In consequence of this step on his part, his brother advocates dispossessed him of the office of Dean at their ensuing annual election; and they were themselves denounced as persecutors by all the Whig speakers and writers of the day.

Notwithstanding all the pains that were taken, it may be questioned if there was much effect produced. Within three weeks after the printing of the second Bill, Mr. Abbot might observe in the House of Commons that of all the English counties only four had met and petitioned against the measure, namely Middlesex and Northumberland, Surrey and Hampshire;

and in the two last there were counter-petitions on the other side.[9] Subsequently there were a few more county meetings and petitions; one, above all, of some contest and importance, in the county of Kent. In these, as was usual, the Sheriff or presiding officer signed in behalf of the whole assemblage. But in other cases, where individual signatures are required, the total numbers may be ascertained. It appears, then, on a recapitulation of the whole, that against the two Bills there were presented ninety-four petitions, and that the number of signatures was 131,284.[1] So small a fragment of the entire population as opposing, seems to indicate that the great mass did not disapprove. It is scarcely too much to say that in ordinary times even the tithe of such rigorous enactments would have aroused ten times more clamour.

Not far dissimilar was the result within the walls of Parliament. There the debates were purposely protracted by the Opposition, to give time for the exertions out of doors. Fox again put forth his great talents in several spirit-stirring speeches. He was seconded in the Peers by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, and (a new ally) Lord Thurlow; in the Commons by Erskine and Whitbread, by Sheridan and Grey. Yet the highest minority among the Peers was only 21. In the Commons the minority did not, on most occasions, much exceed double that number, and only once, on an amendment for delay moved by Mr.

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[9] Parl. Hist., vol. xxxii. p. 447.

[1] See the recapitulation in the History of Two Acts, &c., p. 827.

Curwen—rose to 70; there being even then, however, 267 arrayed on the other side. Thus both the Bills were carried through before Christmas; it may be said with a high hand.

In the course of these debates there were some slips of expression on both sides. Dr. Horsley, Bishop of Rochester, speaking in support of the first Bill, declared that he "did not know what the mass of the people in any country had to do with the laws but to obey them."—"If I had been in Turkey," began Lord Lauderdale, "and had heard such a declaration from the mouth of a Mufti——" On another day the Bishop explained away the phrase by the largest reserves in favour of petitions and elections; still, however, the phrase, as he had first used it, became a kind of watch-word on the Opposition side.

Thus, again, in the Commons Mr. Windham was hurried on by the ardour of debate into declaring that "the Right Hon. gentleman (Mr. Fox) would find that Ministers were determined to exert a vigour beyond the law." Here he was interrupted by loud cries of "Hear" and "Take down his words." It was only after some delay that he could complete his sentence—"as exercised in ordinary times and under ordinary circumstances." But here again the first words were frequently alleged, without their context, to inflame the public mind.

On the other side, Mr. Fox laid himself open to attack. "If," he cried, "Ministers are determined, by means of the corrupt influence they possess in the two Houses of Parliament, to pass the Bills in direct

opposition to the declared sense of a great majority of the people, and if they should be put in force with all their rigorous provisions—then, if my opinion were asked by the people as to their obedience, I should tell them that it was no longer a question of moral obligation and duty, but of prudence." The Minister at once saw and seized the advantage afforded him by these hasty words. He started up and in his loftiest tone denounced them, "with horror," he said, "and indignation"—"as openly advising an appeal to the sword." Mr. Fox rose again and declared that he should retract nothing. Yet, in explanation, he certainly qualified very much. "The case I put was that these Bills might be passed by a corrupt majority of Parliament contrary to the opinion and sentiments of the great body of the nation. If the majority of the people approve of these Bills, I will not be the person to inflame their minds and stir them to rebellion."

The mortification which Mr. Fox and his friends must have felt at seeing the two Bills carried through in spite of all their eloquence and exertions was, perhaps, in some degree allayed by the steps which they were able to take against Mr. John Reeves. In the autumn of 1792, as we have seen, that gentleman had founded the Association "against Republicans and Levellers." In the autumn of 1795 he came forth with a pamphlet designed in like manner for the support of the Government, but most foolishly exalting the monarchical branch of the Constitution at the expense of every other. "The Parliament and the Juries," so he wrote, "were mere adjuncts, subsidiary and occasional powers."

"Here," said Mr. Fox, "is a worse libel than any alleged against the Corresponding Society." "Here," said Mr. Sheridan, "is a case for the most solemn interposition of the House of Commons." Consequently he proposed that Mr. Reeves should be dismissed from all his employments—that his pamphlet should be burned before the Royal Exchange by the common hangman—and that the Attorney-General should be directed to commence a prosecution against it. Of these three not quite coherent proposals, the Government resisted the two former, but not the last. The trial came on before Lord Kenyon early in the ensuing year, when the Jury declared that they thought Mr. Reeves's pamphlet a very improper publication, but that not deeming his motives such as were alleged, they found him "Not Guilty."

In the same spirit, and as seeking to oppose vehemence of one kind to vehemence of another, the Duke of Bedford took occasion in one of the debates upon the Treason Bill to assail Burke, or rather to assail the Ministers for having granted Burke a pension. In these observations he was seconded by Lord Lauderdale, and answered by Lord Grenville. The debate in itself seems little worthy of commemoration. But the genius of Burke has made it immortal. His pamphlet in reply, entitled "A Letter to a Noble Lord," though not free from some defects, will ever be ranked among the master-pieces of the English language. With wondrous fertility of illustration he defends the cause of the British Constitution, while seeming only to plead his own; and he retaliates still more powerfully than he replies.

It is much to Fox's honour that these puny attacks on a great man were in no degree countenanced by him. The expressions of Lord Lauderdale and the Duke of Bedford, as applied to Burke in November, 1795, stand forth in strong contrast to those of Fox himself in May, 1796.

In this short but most active Session before Christmas there was still other business. On the 7th of December Mr. Pitt brought forward his Budget. He proposed a second loan of 18,000,000*l.*, and several new taxes, one above all upon Legacies, whether of money or of land. The loan was at once negotiated, but the new taxes were reserved for subsequent debates.

Next day, and no doubt with a view to the public credit, Mr. Pitt brought down to the House of Commons a Message from the King referring to the newly settled form of Government in France, and expressing his "earnest desire to conclude a treaty for general peace, whenever it can be effected on just and suitable terms for himself and his allies." This announcement in the King's name appears to have produced a highly favourable impression on the public. Yet, in truth, the King was as keen as ever for the prosecution of the war; and his feelings on this subject were among the principal difficulties with which his Ministers had to contend.

CHAPTER XXII.

1796.

Birth of the Princess Charlotte — Separation of the Prince and Princess of Wales — Legacy Duties — Dog Tax: Mr. Dent — Failure of attempt to negotiate with the French Directory — Pitt's anxiety for peace — Dissolution of Parliament — Austrian Subsidy — Victories of General Bonaparte in Italy — English troops withdrawn from Corsica — Capture of Sir Sidney Smith — Treaty between France and Spain — English conquests in the West Indies — Lord Chatham President of the Council — Lord Malmesbury's Embassy to Paris — Projected invasion of Ireland — Pitt's measures of defence — Loyalty Loan — Debates on the Budget — Pitt's Poor-Law Bill — Experiments in Steam Navigation — Failure of the negotiation at Paris — Death of the Empress of Russia.

On the 7th of January in the ensuing year the Princess of Wales was delivered of a daughter, who received the names of Charlotte Augusta. The people rejoiced at the appearance of an heiress to the Throne. But their joy was dashed by the tidings which speedily followed it of the complete estrangement of the Prince of Wales from his consort. He wrote her a letter in civil but cold and unfeeling terms to announce their final separation. Leaving her husband's house, the Princess with her infant daughter went to reside at Blackheath. The King showed a strong disposition to pity and protect her, and thus did dissensions break forth anew between the father and son.

The Session of Parliament which was resumed in February continued until May; and several matters of high importance were discussed. General MacLeod brought forward the employment of blood-hounds

against the Maroons; when Mr. Dundas owned that such an order had been given in Jamaica, but intimated that it was no sooner made known in England than it was disapproved by the Government and countermanded. Under these circumstances the motion was no further pressed.

On the Legacy Duties the discussion was eagerly resumed. To frame any new tax at such a juncture had been no mean trial of Pitt's financial skill. How impose further imposts on a people already staggering under the heavy burdens of war, and moreover in that year the famine price of corn? Yet how maintain the public credit if there were to be a vast increase of debt, and no corresponding effort to add to the revenue? A tax upon successions seemed to steer between these opposite difficulties. It was not in any case a pressure upon poverty, but rather a deduction from much larger sums to be received. Not merely the widow, but the children were to be exempted from any payment at all; while with regard to others, the tax was graduated from two per cent. on brothers or sisters, to six per cent. on strangers in blood; thus maintaining, it was hoped, a just distinction between natural and fortuitous claims.

It was difficult, nay almost impossible, to estimate what this new impost might produce; by Pitt, however, it was taken at only 250,000*l.* a-year. He had declared his intention to include all kinds of property in a single comprehensive measure. But the reception of his Budget enabled him to appreciate more justly the strong repugnance of the landed gentlemen. Thus when he pursued his project in the spring, he found it expedient

to bring it forward in two Bills, the one for personal and the other for real property.

Both the Bills were stoutly opposed by Fox and Fox's friends. As regarding the legacies on personal property they had nothing of much weight to urge. Their principal argument turned on the alleged hardship to illegitimate children, who would have to pay the highest rate as strangers, though entitled to indulgence as objects of natural affection. But in the division the minority was only 16 against 64.

The second Bill, touching the legacies on real estates, was met by much stronger arguments. So at least they seemed in the apprehension of the country gentlemen. The greater part appear to have stayed away, unwilling either to support the Bill or to oppose the Minister. But the Members who remained were most equally divided. After two other neck and neck votes the same evening, the final numbers were 54 against 54. The Speaker gave his casting vote to the Yeas; but Pitt declared that seeing so many gentlemen unfriendly to the Bill, he would move to postpone it for three months. In other words, he resigned it altogether. Nor was this inequality in the law redressed until the Budget of Mr. Gladstone in 1853.

The ill-success of this proposal, and the pressure of public expense, compelled Pitt to have recourse to a further loan of seven millions and a half. The other points of his Budget—as an increase of the duties on tobacco, and on horses kept for pleasure, and a regulation of the duties on sugar and salt—appear to have passed with little difficulty. But the House of Commons was

amused by an unexpected coadjutor to the Minister in the cause of taxation. This was one of their Members, John Dent by name. He availed himself of a petition which came from Leicestershire complaining of the great number of dogs kept in kennels for the recreation of the rich. On this foundation Mr. Dent proposed a duty of half-a-crown on every dog kept either by rich or poor, excepting only those dogs which served as guides to the blind.

Pitt, well pleased to see his Exchequer supplied, declared that he saw nothing improper in laying some tax on the keeping of dogs, provided a distinction were drawn between the opulent and the indigent classes. Thus the proposal of Mr. Dent became the ground-work of a measure which was carried in a subsequent Session. But at the time the principal result was ridicule. Mr. Dent—ever afterwards surnamed "Dog Dent"—appears to have argued against the entire canine race with most extraordinary passion. We are told in the reports of his speech, that he "proceeded to state, from documents in his possession, the ravages which were committed by dogs—the quantity of provisions consumed by them—and the increase of hydrophobia."[1] "We might have imagined," cried Mr. Windham, "that Actæon had revived!!"

If such were the jests even of the Ministers to whom Mr. Dent gave his general support, it may be imagined how much keener were the shafts of Opposition. "I know not," said Sheridan, "whether the Hon. Mover

[1] Parl. Hist., vol. xxxii. p. 995.

is stimulated upon Pythagorean principles to pursue at present those resentments or antipathies which he may have conceived in a former state of existence against a race of animals so long distinguished as the friends of men. . . . . But will not the charge of ingratitude lie against us for such a decree of massacre against these useful animals at the very time when we acknowledge them as allies of the Combined Powers, and when their brethren form part of that army in Jamaica which is fighting successfully against the Maroons, and supporting the cause of social order, humanity, and religion?"

In the same strain did Mr. Courtenay follow. He derided the alarms expressed by Mr. Dent at the increase of hydrophobia. "To alleviate that horror," said he, "I beg leave to suggest the great advantages which sometimes result from a state of insanity. The late Lord Chesterfield laid it down as a maxim that the only possible process by which a Dutchman could become a wit was by being bit by a mad dog; and so ambitious was a late Burgo-master at Amsterdam of being distinguished by this shining accomplishment, that he had submitted to the operation. Here, then, is encouragement for the Hon. gentleman!"

The prospect of negotiation which Pitt had opened in the King's Message of the 8th of December, was sought by him to be carried out in the ensuing month of March. Mr. Wickham, our Minister in Switzerland, applied in writing, as instructed, to M. Barthélemy, the French ambassador at Basle. He inquired whether France was favourable to a Congress of the Belligerent

Powers for the conclusion of a general peace; and what were the grounds of the pacification which France would be willing to propose? The answer of M. Barthélemy was delayed a fortnight to consult the Government at Paris. It proved most ungracious and cold. The Directors stated their doubts of the sincerity of England —were not inclined to a Congress—and would not alienate those of the conquered territories which their Legislature had already annexed to the French Republic. This, in other words, was to declare that they must retain the Belgian provinces. And this was also to forbid the negotiation, since England had bound herself by treaty at the commencement of the war to make no peace without the assent of the Austrian Government, or without maintaining the integrity of the Austrian dominions.

It is probable, indeed, on considering the terms of this answer, and of another answer to the same effect returned to an agent of the Court of Vienna, that the Directors did not at this period desire peace. They might seek to establish their newly-founded power by a victorious campaign. Even now they were busily planning the conquest of Italy and the invasion of Ireland.

The failure of the overtures at Basle, and the publication by England of the documents containing them, gave Fox the ground for an attack in the House of Commons on the 10th of May. In a speech of nearly four hours—one of the greatest of his many great Parliamentary efforts—he reviewed and arraigned the entire conduct of the war, and moved an Address to the Crown.

in its condemnation. With equal ability did Pitt hurl back the charges made. No speaker beyond these two took part in the debate; and it was thus, as the public said, an intellectual duel between them. Considering how many other able and aspiring men were at that period in the House of Commons, we may wonder at their silence upon such a theme. But the wonder ceases when the two great speeches are perused—each so full, so cogent, and so luminous as to leave apparently little to answer and nothing to supply.

A division ensued, when Fox could muster only 42 votes against 216.

There is no doubt, however, that at this juncture Pitt was most earnestly intent on peace. In the course of the past year he had seen at Basle the Confederacy of the Great Powers melt away. He had seen at Quiberon the best blood of France poured out like water, and all in vain. He had seen with still more poignant feelings of concern the increasing strain of the war on the finances and commerce of England. Therefore, though for the present baffled in his overtures of peace, he was determined to renew them at the first favourable moment. But in this course he had great difficulties to contend with. The King was extremely adverse. Windham and some others were much under the influence of Burke. And Burke on this question had heated instead of cooled. He came forth at this period with the last of his great productions, the "Letters on a Regicide Peace," of which the very title shows the tendency; a piece of surpassing eloquence, but extreme and impracticable views. He speaks even of the wish

to treat as of something "that threatened to fail within. To a people," he adds, "who have once been great and proud, and great because they were proud, a change in the national spirit is the most terrible of all revolutions."

The Parliament had now approached its Septennial period, and on its prorogation in May it was dissolved. In the elections which ensued, the main interest centered at Westminster; Fox, in his address to his late constituents, describing the recent legislature with much graphic force, as "having taken more from the liberties and added more to the burdens of the people than any other Parliament which has ever sat." He expected to be returned without opposition, together with his late Ministerial colleague, a gallant Admiral, and one of Lord Howe's fleet, Sir Alan Gardner. Nor indeed (as in pursuance of the late agreement) did any opposition arise from the Government side. But the extreme section of his own party brought forward Horne Tooke; and the polling was continued for the full period of fifteen days. Fox and Sir Alan were returned by large majorities, but the contest gave Horne Tooke opportunity—and this was probably his main inducement for embarking in it—to deliver from the hustings many scurrilous personalities and quick retorts.

Other cities were not so favourable to Fox's friends. Indeed, if we examine in detail their last division in the Commons on the 10th of May, we shall find that of the forty-four Members, including Tellers, who voted on Fox's side, no less than twenty-three sat for Nomination Boroughs, such as Camelford and Calne. It was to these that they again recurred at the Dissolution which

ensued. The largest and most popular constituent bodies throughout the country showed in general a firm determination in such difficult times to support the Government. Their good humour was enhanced by the favourable prospect, soon afterwards fulfilled, of an abundant harvest. Thus the new elections made little or no change in the strength of political parties, and the great majority of Pitt was not at all impaired.

Notwithstanding the pressure upon our own Exchequer, the Ministers did not refuse, by a further subsidy, to aid the Austrian. It was represented by the Court of Vienna that without some succour they should be wholly unable to continue the arduous contest which the French were waging against them both in Germany and Italy. So urgent was the case that—Parliament not then sitting—Pitt consented to send, on his own responsibility, the sum of 1,200,000*l.*, to be legalized by a subsequent vote of the House of Commons.

In Germany there was a change of Generals. Clerfait had been recalled, notwithstanding his brilliant successes at the close of the last campaign; and in his place was sent the Emperor's brother, the Archduke Charles, a young prince who had already given signal proofs of his genius for war. In like manner the French Government had superseded General Pichegru on a vague suspicion of his Royalist intrigues. Moreau now commanded on the Upper, and Jourdan on the Lower Rhine. The first crossed the river at Strasburg, and the second near Neuwied. In August we find Jourdan advanced to Wurzburg and Bamberg, and Moreau beyond the Lech. Several of the earlier engagements

had been greatly in favour of the French. But the Archduke giving battle to Jourdan in the direction of Wurzburg, gained over him an important advantage, and Moreau was in consequence reduced to a retreat. That retreat across the Black Forest, and with foes on every side, has been often extolled as a master-piece of military skill. Finally at the close of the campaign the French were again beyond the Rhine, and compelled to relinquish their blockades of Mayence and Ehrenbreitstein.

Italy, however, was the scene of by far the greatest achievements. There at the beginning of this year the command of the French army had been entrusted to Napoleon Bonaparte, not yet twenty-seven years of age. Within a few weeks the young General astonished the world by a succession of brilliant victories. Ascending from the coast at Savona, and gaining his two first battles in the gorges of the Maritime Alps, he compelled the King of Sardinia to sue for peace, entered in triumph both Milan and Bologna, and drove the Austrians from the entire plain of Northern Italy, while their remaining stronghold of Mantua was invested before the close of July. I rapidly pass over this campaign as not in truth belonging to the Life of Pitt, nor even to the History of England. Yet how hard to compress in a single sentence the notice of exploits upon which whole volumes might be worthily employed!

For the relief of Mantua the Austrians made strenuous exertions. Marshal Wurmser with a new body of forces was detached from the scene of war in Germany, and sanguine hopes were entertained of his prevailing against

General Bonaparte. "I will give a good account of that young man!" said Wurmser, a veteran of fourscore, despising an adversary not yet one-third of his own age. But on the contrary in several encounters—as at Lonato, at Castiglione, and on the Brenta—he was routed with heavy loss, and he had no resource but to throw himself into the beleaguered city and take part in its defence. Meanwhile the French were forming the territories of Modena and Bologna into a new state, with the title of the Cispadane Republic; and to the South the King of Naples was led by their successes to offer his submission, and conclude a treaty of peace.

Nor were the victories of Bonaparte without great influence on his native island. Proud of his fame, the Corsicans began to incline to his party. For some time past, moreover, there had been a growing alienation between them and the Viceroy of George the Third. Faults may perhaps be imputed to each side; some degree of fickleness to the Corsicans, and some degree of misrule to the English. Sir Gilbert Elliot had conceived an impolitic jealousy of General Paoli, and had visited with his displeasure one of his own best officers, Colonel John Moore, for his friendly communications with that eminent man. It was natural that the partisans of General Paoli should cease to be very warm partisans of England. To this it may be added that the new Constitution, framed in some measure on the model of ours, was not found to accord with the wants and wishes of the people. There were already some partial risings, and it became quite clear that the Corsicans, far from opposing, would most probably

welcome the invasion which was then preparing by the exiles at Leghorn. Why then run the chance of a doubtful conflict for no good end, and why not rather at once withdraw the British troops? In October orders came accordingly, but too late to prevent all collision, since a portion of the French invaders had already landed. By the aid of Commodore Nelson, however, and his squadron, the British troops, about three thousand in number, were safely embarked at Bastia, and departed from the island after an inglorious occupation of two years. With them went General Paoli, who found in London a secure and honoured retreat for the remainder of his life.

At sea there was no action of importance in the course of this year; but in April the French might boast that they had captured one of the boldest of the English captains. Sir Sidney Smith, already celebrated for several feats of valour, and who had in his character much of the Knights Errant of the olden time, was then in command of the Diamond frigate off the coast of Normandy. Seeing in Havre Roads a French privateer of great speed, Le Vengeur, which had been several times chased in vain, he resolved to attempt its capture, and this object he accomplished by means of his boats. The French coast, however, was alarmed; and a number of small craft filled with troops speedily surrounded Sir Sidney in his prize, where, after a gallant defence protracted as long as possible, he found himself compelled to surrender. The Directory maintained that his object had been to excite an insurrection on the territory of the Republic; and on

this flimsy plea they treated him as a prisoner not of war, but of state. He was sent with John Wright, one of his midshipmen and fellow captives, to the Tour du Temple at Paris, where they were confined in separate cells.

At the time when the head of Louis the Sixteenth rolled upon the block, it was certainly not foreseen that the chief of the still reigning Bourbon Princes would be the first to conclude a treaty of alliance with the "Regicide Republic." Such was now the case with Spain. There a weak-minded monarch, Charles the Fourth, was wholly governed by his Queen, Louisa of Parma, and she in her turn by her favourite, Don Manuel Godoy, created Prince of the Peace. Moved partly by dread of the French arms, and partly by inducements still less worthy, a treaty of alliance with France was signed at St. Ildefonso on the 19th of August; and in pursuance of this concert of measures a Manifesto declaring war against England was issued on the 5th of October,—a Manifesto truly described in the English reply as grounded only upon "frivolous pretexts and pretended wrongs."

Nor was there any brighter gleam in the diplomatic tidings from Berlin. On the 5th of August the King of Prussia had concluded with the French Republic two Conventions, not indeed of alliance, but of amity. By the second, which was for some time kept secret, His Majesty engaged, on due compensations to himself and others at a general peace, not to oppose the full cession to France of the territories to the left of the Rhine. In vain did Pitt remonstrate; in vain did he

send Mr. Hammond on a special mission to Berlin, and endeavour to draw the King of Prussia to a juster sense of his duties to the German empire.

On the whole, the events of the war in Europe, so far as England was concerned, might almost justify the fine metaphor of Burke, where he calls them "the disastrous events which have followed one another in a long unbroken funereal train, moving in a procession that seemed to have no end." It was only from beyond the bounds of Europe that good tidings came. The Duke of York and Mr. Dundas had hastened to repair the injustice done by Sir Gilbert Elliot to Colonel John Moore. They sent him to the West Indies with the rank of Brigadier General, and as second in command to Sir Ralph Abercromby. The arrival of these good officers and of a large body of English troops entirely altered the aspect of affairs in that quarter. The tide of conquest was turned at once against the French. Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent's were successively wrested from them after a stout resistance; and Demerara and Berbice more easily from their Dutch allies. And although no impression could be made on St. Domingo, yet it might be said that of all the Sugar Islands Guadeloupe alone remained in the enemy's hands.

Early in September Mr. Pitt travelled to Weymouth, desiring to speak to His Majesty on several points of public business. From Weymouth he wrote to his brother, and from London on his return to his mother, in letters that will speak for themselves.

"Weymouth, Sunday, Sept. 4, 1796.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I arrived here yesterday afternoon, in consequence of several occurrences which made me anxious to see the King; and I am so pressed to return to town, that I cannot find the necessary time either to take Burton in my way, or to wait till to-morrow for the chance of seeing you here. Among many things which I have to mention to you, one relates to yourself. You will of course have seen the account of Lord Mansfield's death, and you will probably receive from the King himself the proposal (which he suggested to me before I could mention it) that you should succeed as President. The difference between the income of that and your present situation is not as considerable as I wish it was; but as far as it goes, it is on the right side, and enough so to be some object in point of convenience. In the way in which it is proposed, it will also, I trust, be not unpleasant to you as a mark of the King's sentiments towards you, and I am sure the arrangement will be very agreeable to every body. What will be in that case the best way of disposing of the Privy Seal will require some consideration. Be so good as to let me hear from you on this subject as soon as you conveniently can. The other subjects I wanted to speak of are too large for a letter written in haste, but I conclude we shall meet soon in town. Hammond's mission has produced nothing effectual at Berlin. We therefore see nothing left (in order to bring the question of peace and war to a point) but to send directly to Paris. The step of applying for a passport will be taken immediately, but the instructions to the person sent will not be finally resolved on till next week, by which time you will probably be

in town. An immediate Spanish war, though not yet formally announced, seems certain, but this does not come unexpectedly; and (if we can satisfy the country that we have done enough towards general peace) it will not, I trust, produce much embarrassment. Our great apparent difficulty is finance, which can only be removed by bringing people to a temper for very unusual exertions. My love to Lady Chatham.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

"Downing Street, Sept. 6, 1796.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I entertained till within these very few days the hope that my visit to Weymouth would have afforded me the opportunity of taking Burton in my way back. But it has happened very unluckily that a number of very pressing points of business arose just at the moment of my setting out, and made it impossible for me to extend my absence from London longer than from Friday afternoon, when I set out, till yesterday, when I returned. I am afraid too, that as things now stand, I can hardly flatter myself with the possibility of finding a moment for any distant excursion between this time and the meeting of Parliament, which will probably take place on the 27th; or if it is postponed at all, it will only be for a very short time. I must, therefore, very reluctantly give up the prospect of seeing you till after our Session, which I trust will not be very long, and will I hope prove a very useful one. The apparent difficulties of the present moment will, I am persuaded, when they are discussed prove much less than many persons seem now disposed to think them; and I am in great hopes of being able to come to you before the end of the year, leaving everything in

a more promising train than it has appeared to be lately. The state of France, as described in the last message of the Directory, is of itself very encouraging; and we have to-day accounts (through Berlin) of a recent victory of the Archduke, which, if they should be confirmed in their full extent, will materially improve the picture.

"You will, I am sure, be pleased to hear that on my arrival at Weymouth it was immediately proposed to me that my brother should succeed, on the present vacancy, to the Presidentship of the Council. I could not wait for his arrival, though he was expected Monday; but left a letter for him to mention the arrangement, which I think he cannot but like, as very flattering in the way in which it comes, and it is also materially better in point of income than his present office. I shall probably have his answer to-morrow. I hope the Bishop of Lincoln may be able to find an opportunity of making the provision Mr. Graves applies for.

"Ever, my dear Mother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

Lord Chatham in his reply readily accepted the Presidency of the Council, and the office of Privy Seal was left vacant for some time. Not till February, 1798, was it conferred upon Lord Westmorland.

In proceeding to Weymouth, the main object of the Prime Minister was to lay before the King a project of negotiation. The reduction of the French settlements in the West Indies had given Pitt strong hopes of peace. By offering to restore them to France, France on her part might be induced to restore the Low Countries to the Emperor. With these views the English Minister

resolved to attempt a direct negotiation. Subsequently he and Lord Grenville proposed that Lord Malmesbury should be the person to proceed on a special embassy to Paris; and to this nomination they obtained, though not given without some reluctance, the assent of George the Third. The Directory sent the requisite passports, and thus, on opening the new Parliament on the 6th of October, the King's Speech might complacently announce the renewal of negotiation. The ambassador himself arrived at Paris a fortnight afterwards.

But while the Directors thus expressed their willingness to treat, they were actively pursuing a project for the invasion of our shores. Ireland, above all, was the object. A large fleet had been equipped at Brest, to which was now expected the accession of some Spanish vessels. Considerable land forces were collected, and General Hoche was appointed to the chief command. Earlier in the year a man of no common ability and ardour, Theobald Wolfe Tone, had hastened over from America to take part in the expected enterprise. He received the rank of Adjutant-General and Chef de Brigade in the French service, under the asumed name of Smith, and held conferences both with M. Carnot and General Clarke. The latter, described by Tone in 1796 as "a handsome, smooth-faced young man," was better known in after years under the title of Duke de Feltre, and as Minister of War both to Napoleon and Louis the Eighteenth. At this time he stood high in the favour of the Directory. Being born of Irish parents —nay, as he used to boast, of the blood of the Irish Kings—and having once travelled for a few weeks in

Ireland, he claimed to have an intimate knowledge of Irish affairs. Yet, according to Tone, he exhibited the most astounding ignorance upon them. One day he asked Tone whether, in the event of a French invasion, the invaders might not hope for the aid of the Lord Chancellor. "Any one who knows Ireland," writes Tone in his journal, "will readily believe that I did not find it easy to make a serious answer to this question. Yes—Fitzgibbon would be very likely, from his situation, his principles, his hopes and his fears, his property and the general tenor of his conduct, to begin a revolution in Ireland!"[2]

To this project of invasion the King's Speech at the opening of the new Parliament adverted—"at a time," said His Majesty, "when the enemy has openly manifested the intention of attempting a descent on these kingdoms." And the Ministers lost no time in bringing forward their measures of defence. "Our navy," said Pitt, "is the natural defence of this kingdom in case of invasion: in this department, however, little remains to be done, our fleet at this moment being more formidable than at any former period of our history. . . . But I would propose in the first place a levy of fifteen thousand men from the different parishes for the sea service and for recruiting the regiments of the line. . . . Of all the modes to obtain a further force there is none so expeditious, so effectual, and attended with so little expense as that of raising a supplementary

[2] Diary, March 14, 1796. This publication (which should be read in the American edition of 1826, as better and more complete than the English) here becomes of great historical interest and value.

body of Militia to be grafted upon the present establishment. I would propose that this supplement shall consist of sixty thousand men, not to be immediately called out, but to be enrolled, officered, and gradually trained, so as to be fit for service at a time of danger. . . Another measure which I would suggest to the Committee is to provide a considerable force of irregular cavalry. With a view to repelling an invasion, the more this species of force is extended the greater advantage is likely to accrue from it, as an invading enemy, who must be destitute of horses, can have no means to meet it upon equal terms. . . . By the produce of the recent tax we find that the number of horses kept for pleasure in England, Scotland, and Wales, is about two hundred thousand. It certainly would not be a very severe regulation, when compared with the object to be accomplished, to require one-tenth of these horses for the public service. Thus might we raise a cavalry force of twenty thousand. . . . There is still another resource which ought not to be neglected. The licences to shoot game taken out by gamekeepers are no fewer than seven thousand. Upon the supposition of an invasion, it would be of no small importance to form bodies of men who, from their dexterity in using firearms, might be highly useful in harassing the operations of the enemy."[3]

Against these measures of defence—which are here most briefly sketched—both Sheridan and Fox inveighed with great warmth, though but little success.

[3] Speech in the House of Commons, Oct. 18, 1796.

"I believe," said Fox, "that the French have no intention to invade us. They have a Government too well informed of the disposition of the people and the situation of the country to hope for success in such an enterprise. Supposing they do make that desperate attempt, I have no doubt as to the issue. But what ought we to do in the mean time? What is the duty of this House at this moment? To cherish the spirit of freedom in the people; to restore to them that for which their ancestors have bled; to make the Ministers really responsible. Not to be confiding in the servants of the Crown, but watchful and jealous of the exercise of their power. . . . Then will you have no occasion for adding to your internal military force, for then even an invasion would never be formidable."

Such was the advice that Fox—at a moment of great public danger, and when the very existence of the kingdom might be at stake—deemed it consistent with his duty to address to the House of Commons. Such was the spirit with which on subsequent days he continued to carp at the Ministerial measures for defence. No wonder if the spleen of independent Members was aroused. "I will not," said Mr. Wilberforce, "charge these gentlemen with desiring an invasion; but I cannot help thinking that they would rejoice to see just so much mischief befall their country as would bring themselves into office." These words in the debate were resented, with much fierceness by Sheridan, with much good temper by Fox. "I fear," says Wilberforce in his Diary, "that I went too far." "No," wrote to him his friend Dr. Cookson, "you did not go too far. What you said is what every-

body thinks, but what nobody else had the courage to speak out."[4]

Mr. Wilberforce had, however, another grievance of his own. In one of the new Bills it was provided that the supplemental corps of Militia should be trained on Sunday afternoons. Against this clause the Member for Yorkshire protested, and finally prevailed. In his Diary he writes as follows: "Dundas is now clear that it would shock the general morals of Scotland to exercise their volunteers on Sunday; but I can scarce persuade Pitt that in England it would even in serious people excite any disgust."

Next in order came the financial measures. Here was ample scope for the most gloomy apprehensions. The National Debt had now risen to upwards of four hundred millions, and the strain upon the public resources was indicated by the progressive decline in the price of Stocks. In January of this year the lowest point of the Three per Cents. had been 67; in the September following they fell at one time to 53. Nevertheless a new loan of at least eighteen millions was required by the pressing exigencies of the public service. Pitt, in the course of the autumn, held long and anxious consultations with the Bank Directors. They agreed that to attempt to raise the new loan in the ordinary manner would be an operation of exceeding cost and very doubtful success. Under these circumstances, Pitt, it may justly be said, evinced his own public spirit when he relied on and appealed to the public

[4] Life of Wilberforce, by his Sons, vol. ii. p. 181.

spirit of the people. He announced a loan of 18,000,000*l.* at five per cent., to be taken at 112*l.* 10*s.* for every 100*l.* Stock, and with an option to the proprietors to be paid off at par within two years after a treaty of peace. These terms, which in our own day would seem exorbitant, were but scanty at that time of danger and distress. "From the very first," says a highly competent judge, "the undertaking was a source of loss to the subscribers, so far as the market value was concerned."[5] This statement I derive from an excellent Essay by Mr. Newmarch, on the Loans raised by Mr. Pitt—an Essay to which in my review of his financial policy I shall have more ample occasion to refer.

Under these circumstances, then, the Subscription List for the Loan of 1796 could never have been filled had not Pitt in proposing it addressed himself to higher motives than the love of gain. It was by no means as a profitable speculation that he urged it, but as a patriotic duty. And hence it was called "the Loyalty Loan."

Not every government would thus appeal to the people. Not every people, I add with pride, would thus respond to the government. For nothing could be more enthusiastic than the manner in which that response was made. Here are the very words of a contemporary writer:—"On the first day of the new loan (Thursday, the 1st of December), before the close of the books, 5,000,000*l.* were subscribed by merchants and others. At ten o'clock this morning, Monday, the 5th of

[5] Essay by W. Newmarch, Esq., June, 1855, p. 120.

December, the parlour doors of the Bank were opened; before which time the lobby was crowded. Numbers could not get near the books at all, while others, to testify their zeal, called to the persons at the books then signing to put down their names for them, as they were fearful of being shut out. At about twenty minutes past eleven the subscription was declared to be completely full, and hundreds in the room were reluctantly compelled to go away. By the post innumerable orders came from the country for subscriptions to be put down, scarcely one of which could be executed; and long after the subscription-list was closed persons continued coming, and were obliged to depart disappointed. It is a curious fact, and well worth stating, that the subscription was completely filled in fifteen hours and twenty minutes, namely, two hours on Thursday, six on Friday, six on Saturday, and one hour and twenty minutes on Monday. The Duke of Bridgewater actually tendered a Draft at sight on his banker for 100,000*l.*, which he subscribed to the new loan, but which of course could not be accepted, since the Act is not yet passed."[6] It may be added that another man of princely fortune, namely the Duke of Bedford, though in strenuous opposition to the Government, subscribed in due time an equal sum.

The tokens of such a spirit—a spirit which raises and dignifies and well-nigh hallows the common-place arithmetic of the Stock Exchange—may make the heart of any Englishman thrill. Had the French been duly apprised of all these circumstances, they would surely

[6] Ann. Regist., 1796, part ii. p. 44.

have abated of their eagerness for projects to invade us. The clangour of their equipments at Brest would have died away; and the sails already swelling to the East wind would have been furled. They would have acknowledged that a people with such a spirit, unshaken in the most trying times, could never be subdued.

Great as was the triumph of Pitt, he could not indulge it. A most painful, but, as he deemed, a bounden duty was before him. Even with that pressure on the resources of the people, he was resolved to lay on new imposts providing for the payment of the interest of the new loan, and for the operation of the Sinking Fund. His own feelings at that period are best portrayed in the words of his principal colleague. Reviewing this whole question thirty-two years afterwards, Lord Grenville adverts to Mr. Pitt as follows: "With an ardent and generous spirit, devoting all his energies to the national prosperity, he risked, and in no small degree surrendered, his highly-valued popularity to the necessity of a large additional taxation which that measure (the Sinking Fund) compelled him to establish and maintain. This was no light sacrifice, nor did he feel it such; but he anticipated in return with unspeakable delight the full tide of wealth which, in some distant but auspicious moment, the results of these disinterested exertions were to pour upon the country. What he so ardently wished he willingly believed." [7]

On the 7th of December, the day but one after the sub-

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[7] Essay on the supposed Advantages of a Sinking Fund, by Lord Grenville, March 15, 1828.

scriptions to the Loyalty Loan had closed, Pitt brought forward his Budget in the House of Commons. He proposed new taxes amounting to upwards of 2,000,000*l.*, derived from a great variety of sources, as higher rates on the fine kinds of tea, on sales by auction, on British and foreign spirits, on sugar, on houses, on stage-coaches, and on postage. He also announced the subsidy of 1,200,000*l.* which, during the Recess, he had remitted to the Emperor without consent of Parliament.

Against this expenditure, against this subsidy, against all the "false and deceitful statements" (for so Mr. Grey termed them) of the Minister, both Grey and Fox most bitterly inveighed. Nor did Fox forbear from exalting by comparison the financial credit of the country of Assignats. "Only last year," he said, "the Minister had spoken of France as 'on the verge, nay in the gulf of bankruptcy.' These had been his very words. Now," said Fox, "I should like to know whether the French have yet passed the gulf of bankruptcy? I hope they have, for certainly while they were in it they were most dreadful enemies to this country!"

The conduct of Pitt in having granted a subsidy to Austria without the consent of Parliament excited some displeasure both in the City and the House of Commons. The citizens, assembling in their Common Hall, called upon their Members to support a vote of censure. That same evening, the 13th of December, the censure was moved by Fox in the Lower House. Without any more particular narration we may readily conceive how in the debate, the one party maintained that the Constitution had been violated, and the other that the public interests

had been served. In the division Fox well nigh doubled his customary numbers, mustering 81 against 285. However, when a few days afterwards Pitt brought down a Message from His Majesty, stating the necessity of further advances to the Emperor, and when the Minister proposed the vote of another half million for that purpose, the vote passed, with great objection indeed, but little difficulty.

Another motion that touched the Court of Vienna was brought forward by General Fitzpatrick. He renewed the proposal which he had made almost three years before, that the King should be entreated to intercede with his ally for the deliverance of General La Fayette and his companions in captivity. In his speech he drew a most touching picture, not only of the rigours inflicted on the General in the dungeons of Olmütz, but of the merits and sufferings of Madame de La Fayette, whom he justly termed an admirable pattern of female virtue. "I readily admit, Sir," thus Pitt began, "that a more striking and pathetic appeal was never made to the feelings of the House. . . . . Nevertheless, however much our humanity may be interested, yet, considered as a question of political relations, it is not one which comes at all within our cognizance. . . . . No instance of such interference as is now proposed has ever taken place at any former period, ... nor could such interference be attempted without establishing a principle of the most unwarrantable kind—a principle inconsistent with the internal policy and independent rights of Foreign States."

A long debate ensued, which even at the present day

has by no means lost its interest. Wilberforce, after much doubt in his own mind, declared himself favourable to the object of the motion. We find in his journal: "Never did I rise to speak with more reluctance. I expected all the ridicule which followed; and when Dundas, with a happy peculiarity of expression, talked of my Amendment as designed to catch the *straagling* humanity of the House, there was a perfect roar of laughter."[8]

Fox, Grey, and Sheridan all spoke eloquently in support of the motion. Then Windham rose to resist it. But the ground which he took was wholly different from Pitt's. He made his stand altogether upon Burke's. For the objections which he urged against the motion rested in great measure on the principles and proceedings of La Fayette in France. "As the mere suffering of an individual," said he, "the case of La Fayette must certainly excite pity. There is no case of calamity whatever, which if abstracted from other considerations, but must awaken the feelings of every one deserving the name of man. . . . . But if La Fayette has fallen into misery, he has fallen a victim to his own acts and his own principles. He has betrayed and ruined his country and his King, and taken refuge for his character and conscience in his own defeat; claiming merit for stopping just at that point beyond which it was out of his power to go, and when he became the enemy of those whom he had made the instruments of his designs upon the King. . . . . Mankind are not formed to pity at once the oppressed and the oppressor."

[8] Diary, Dec. 16, 1796.

In the division which ensued, the minority, notwithstanding the aid of Wilberforce, could muster no more than fifty votes.

In December, 1795, Mr. Samuel Whitbread, the active and able Member for Bedford, and the head of a flourishing brewery, had brought in a Bill to regulate the wages of labourers in husbandry. His plan was to give the Justices of the Peace power to fix the *minimum* rate at the Easter Quarter Sessions. When in the February following the Bill came on for a second reading, it was opposed by Pitt. He declared that he had most carefully considered the subject, and endeavoured to obtain the best information upon it. But he took his stand on the unanswerable grounds, as we now acknowledge them to be, of Adam Smith. "Will it not be wiser for the House," he said, "to consider the operation of general principles, and rely upon the effect of their unconfined exercise? I conceive that to promote the free circulation of labour, to remove the obstacles by which industry is prohibited from availing itself of its resources, would go far to remedy the evils and diminish the necessity of applying for relief to the poor-rate. But," Mr. Pitt continued, "I should wish that an opportunity were given of restoring the original purity of the Poor Laws, and of removing those corruptions by which they have been obscured. . . . . These great points of granting relief according to the number of children, preventing removals at the caprice of the parish officer, and making them subscribe to friendly societies, would tend in a very great degree to remove every ground of complaint. . . . . All this,

however, I will confess is not enough, if we do not engraft upon it Resolutions to discourage relief where it is not wanted. . . . . The extension of schools of industry is also an object of material importance. The suggestion of these schools was originally drawn from Lord Hale and Mr. Locke, and upon such authority I have no hesitation in recommending the plan to the encouragement of the Legislature. . . . . Such a plan would convert the relief granted to the poor into an encouragement for industry, instead of being, as it is by the present Poor Laws, a premium for idleness, and a school for sloth. There are also a number of subordinate circumstances to which it is necessary to attend. The law which prohibits giving relief where any visible property remains should be abolished. That degrading condition should be withdrawn. No temporary occasion should force a British subject to part with the last shilling of his little capital, and to descend to a state of wretchedness from which he could never recover, merely that he might be entitled to a casual supply."

The outline of the Bill which Mr. Pitt drew on this occasion seemed to meet with decided approbation. Accordingly, in the course of the summer and autumn, he applied himself to frame a Bill on the principles which he had announced. On the 22nd of December he laid it before the House of Commons. It was drawn up with great care, and consisted of sixty-eight clauses. A copy of it is still preserved in the Library of the House of Lords. An abstract of it, clause by clause, as derived from that source, was given in the *Times* of March 19, 1838.

The object of Mr. Pitt in laying his Bill upon the Table before Christmas was, "that during the interval of Parliament it might be circulated in the country, and undergo the most serious and mature investigation." But the result was not favourable. So many objections were started, and so much repugnance shown by the Members of the House of Commons, that there was no encouragement to press the measure farther, and no hope to pass it into law.

In 1796, as in the preceding year, there were some experiments in Steam Navigation set on foot by Earl Stanhope, and sanctioned by the Lords of the Admiralty. He had induced them to construct a ship in the Thames, and had signed a bond, dated June 30, 1794, with a penalty to himself of 9000*l.*, "to indemnify the public in case the said ship should not answer the purpose of Government." The subject must be owned to be a curious one, as tending to throw some light on the first steps of a gigantic change in the British navy; and the origin of the scheme is summed up as follows in a letter which Earl Stanhope addressed to the Lords of the Admiralty.

"Chevening, Dec. 22, 1795.

"My Lords,

"Your Lordships no doubt are all of you informed that an *Ambi-Navigator* ship (called the Kent) has been constructed by Government for the purpose of ascertaining the efficacy of the important plan, invented by me, of navigating ships of the largest size without any wind, and even against wind and waves; and that on the 30th day of June in the year 1794 I gave a bond to

His Majesty relative to that ship and plan. The steam-engine apparatus constructed under my direction, and intended for moving that vessel, is now on board her in Greenland Dock. For several months past I have been making detached experiments in the ship on various parts of the apparatus: for I do not intend to content myself with merely producing a result, but my series of experiments is such as to be intended to establish every part of the subject on clear and irrefragable proofs, and to ascertain demonstratively what is the best possible plan.

"The subject being a new one, the workmen have had everything to learn, and it has taken more time to complete the work than was at first expected. The time mentioned in my bond to be allowed for the making of the experiments is nearly expired. I therefore request your Lordships to add a few more months (such as eight, ten, or twelve) for that purpose, as I take for granted that your Lordships would not deem it either proper or expedient to stop experiments of such consequence in their progress, and at the eve of their conclusion.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"STANHOPE."

In reply, on the part of the Board of Admiralty (Dec. 28, 1795), the Secretary, Mr. Evan Nepean, in a liberal spirit, granted the longest period of extension that had been suggested, namely twelve months. The correspondence which I here select and subjoin took place, as will be seen, near the close of that further term.

Earl Spencer to Earl Stanhope.

"My Lord, "Admiralty, Nov. 5, 1796.

"The delay which I alluded to in my former letter arose from some doubt whether the experiment which has already been made was sufficient to ascertain the properties of the Kent. In order therefore to remove any doubt upon that subject, the Board of Admiralty have determined on trying another experiment for that express purpose; for which (if your Lordship has no objection to it) directions will be immediately given.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"Spencer."

Earl Stanhope to Earl Spencer.

"My Lord, "London, Nov. 8, 1796.

"The Kent is at present (whatever it may be hereafter) a Government vessel. The Board of Admiralty therefore have a right, and will do right, to make with her such experiments as they shall deem proper. My consent is not necessary, nor should I refuse it if it were.

"Two things no doubt your Lordship will think it expedient to do. First, that the necessary directions may be immediately given for making those experiments respecting which I shall not interfere. Secondly, that they may be made within a short space of time, inasmuch as your Lordship must be sensible that whilst the vessel is out, no adjustment can be made in the steam apparatus, in order to make the intended experiments with steam.

"That subject is of *far* more importance than the Board of Admiralty seems to be aware of.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"Stanhope."

Earl Spencer to Earl Stanhope.

"MY LORD, "Admiralty, May 17, 1797.

". . . . . The Report of the Navy Board (dated the 6th of this month), to which the Admiralty must pay some attention, is positively against your Lordship's proposal of renewing your bond; but I believe the fairest way will be to transmit to you a copy of it, that your Lordship may have an opportunity of explaining some points which it is possible they may have misconceived.

"You may depend upon my not feeling the most distant intention of trifling with you on this or any other subject, though I certainly do not yet see any reason to alter the opinion I have already expressed, that the method you have imagined of moving ships, independent of wind and tide, will not be found to answer the very great expectations your Lordship appears to have formed of it.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"SPENCER."

The experiments made by the Kent were satisfactory to Lord Stanhope; not so to the Navy Board. On the whole the Lords of the Admiralty deemed this trial of Steam Navigation to be conclusive against it, and they required of Lord Stanhope the penalty stipulated in his bond. Their correspondence with him from first to last was conducted in a most honourable spirit, and with perfect fairness of intention. But I think that we may deduce from it their early distrust and disrelish of the scheme. We may, I think, infer that the trial was not freely accepted, but was

rather by some extraneous cause imposed upon them. If so, the question arises, who imposed it? Considering the political hostility of the projector to the administration, and his personal estrangement from Mr. Pitt, no party and no family influence are here to be imagined. No other alternative, so far as I can see, remains, than that the Prime Minister, when consulted, urged the trial of the scheme from his own impression of its possible merits. There is, therefore, as I conceive, a strong probability that Mr. Pitt was the earliest of all our statesmen in office who discerned, however dimly in the distance, the coming importance of steam to navigation, and who desired to bring it to the test; and this at the very time when his own First Lord of the Admiralty, in other respects a most judicious administrator, looked down upon the project as an empty dream.

The more heavily, at this juncture, did the cares of finance and state press on Pitt, the more anxiously did he turn his eyes to the prospects of the new negotiation which the King had sanctioned, and which the Ministers had already commenced.

If the negotiation thus commenced did not end in success, it was certainly from no want of ability in those who conducted it on the part of England. Pitt himself gave assiduous attention to each step in this great matter. Lord Grenville continued to be Secretary for Foreign Affairs. As Under Secretary the Prime Minister had in the course of this very year appointed a young man of the highest Parliamentary promise, fulfilled by his subsequent renown. This was George Canning, who, born in 1770, and entering the House

of Commons under the Minister's auspices in 1793, had already won laurels in debate. To Pitt the young orator attached himself, not merely with party zeal, but with all the warmth of personal regard. "In his grave," he said long afterwards, "my political allegiance lies buried."

For the foreign part of the negotiation Pitt at first designed that Mr. Jackson, who had commenced, should still pursue it. But Mr. Jackson, though an able public servant, did not fill a sufficient space in the public eye. "Everybody feels it," writes Wilberforce, "but few dare tell Pitt any such thing. People will not so much believe him in earnest in the treaty as if a more important character were employed." Pitt yielded at last to these representations, obtained also the assent of the King, and, as I have shown in a preceding passage, entrusted this high commission to Lord Malmesbury, then beyond all doubt at the head of our diplomatic service.

Yet the inherent difficulties of the task were in truth insuperable. So long as they remained in general terms—so long as "equivalents and restitutions" were vaguely talked of—there might be hopes of a favourable issue. But when it came to close quarters—when Lord Grenville in plain terms sent instructions as follows—"On this point therefore of suffering the Netherlands to remain a part of France, your Lordship must not give the smallest hope that His Majesty will be induced to relax[9]"—it became clear at once that

[9] To Lord Malmesbury, Dec. 11, 1796. Malmesbury Corresp. vol. iii. p. 341.

the French Government were wholly averse to such a sacrifice. They were also much displeased at the frequent references for orders and instructions made by the English Ambassador to his Court; and at last, in a sally of ill-humour, they put an end to the whole negotiation. On the 19th of December M. Charles Delacroix, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, wrote to Lord Malmesbury requiring him and his suite to depart from Paris within forty-eight hours, and to lose no time in quitting the territory of the French Republic. The Directors, he said, would listen to no proposal contrary to the edicts which had fixed the limits of that territory. If, added M. Delacroix, the English Government really wished for peace, the French was ready to conclude it on such a basis and by the mere interchange of couriers.

On the rupture of this negotiation, the papers relating to it were immediately laid before Parliament. Pitt in the one House, and Lord Grenville in the other (each on the 30th of December), moved an Address pledging them to support His Majesty in the necessary prosecution of the war. "In fact," said Pitt, as he concluded a most able speech of three hours, "the question is not how much you will give for peace, but how much disgrace you will suffer at the outset of your negotiations for it. In these circumstances, then, are we to persevere in the war with a spirit and energy worthy of the British name and of the British character? Or are we, by sending couriers to Paris, to prostrate ourselves at the feet of a stubborn and supercilious Government?"

No sooner had Pitt concluded than Erskine started up, eager to assail the negotiation, the Ministers, and

everything appertaining to them. But after a few sentences, he faltered, broke down, and resumed his seat in confusion. Then Fox with his usual readiness stood forward in the place of his friend. "Sorry indeed am I"—thus he began—"on account of my Hon. and Learned friend, whose indisposition has suddenly compelled him to sit down; sorry for the sake of the House, whose information has been thus unpleasantly interrupted; and sorry for the cause of peace and Great Britain, which Ministers seem determined to push to the last verge of ruin." Fox then proceeded to charge upon the Government a long succession of "little tricks and artifices." He said that they had not desired peace, but only to obtain the credit of pacific intentions. Their deliberate object had been, by unreasonable proposals and vexatious delays, to rouse the pride of the Directory, and compel them to break off the negotiation. Such were the statements of Mr. Fox; but is there at the present day even one man willing to endorse them? Or are there many instances on record of misrepresentations so extreme?

On this occasion, however, Fox was not followed into the lobby by a numerous train. The amendment which he moved obtained but thirty-seven votes; and the same amendment, moved by the Earl of Guilford in the Peers, no more than eight.

In this abrupt dismissal of the British Minister, and, as Pitt declared it, "this studied insult" to the British people, it was the opinion of Lord Malmesbury that the French Government had been partly swayed by the tidings from Petersburg. On the 17th of No-

vember the Empress Catherine died. There had been no sign of illness till she was found stretched upon the floor, and she had been in good spirits till the very morning of that day.[1] It may be observed that the circumstances of her death bear a great resemblance to those of George the Second's.

On the same night that the news had reached him, Pitt announced it to Dundas as follows:—

"Downing Street, Sunday, ½ past 11, P.M.
(December, 1796.)

"DEAR DUNDAS,

"A new scene is opened on the Continent by an event of which the account is just come—the death of the Empress of Russia on the 17th of last month. The despatches are not yet come to the Office. We cannot therefore yet tell in what state our treaty was left, but I am afraid much good is not in any case to be expected from the new Emperor. It is difficult to say whether one ought to regret the most that she had not died sooner or lived longer.

"Yours ever,
"W. P."

At Petersburg the only son of the late Empress was at once proclaimed her successor, under the title of Paul the First. As may be inferred from the preceding letter, the new Sovereign was not thought to incline to the English interest. It was not yet known how weak, nay even disordered, was his intellect; and how little reliance could be placed on any resolution that he formed.

[1] Histoire de Catherine II., par Castera, vol. iii. p. 174.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

LETTERS AND EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM KING GEORGE THE THIRD TO MR. PITT.

June 5, 1788.

I shall not object to advancing Sir James Harris to a seat in the House of Lords, provided he is accompanied by Sir Joseph Yorke. For though the latter may not have the same claim to favour from Administration, he certainly has it for forty years from the fountain of honour. If I do not remember past service, and only think of the moment, I shall not act the part I ought, which is the remembering that justice is the first duty of a Sovereign. Had not Sir James been recommended, I should not have thought of Sir Joseph; but the favour to the one makes the other indispensable, though never solicited.

G. R.

Kew, June 12, 1788.

A pretty smart bilious attack prevents my coming this day to town. I am certainly better than yesterday, and if it goes on mending this day, I shall hope to see Mr. Pitt in town to-morrow. Sir George Baker approves of what I have done, and I trust his advice will remove the remains of this complaint. On returning from the review I was forced to take to my bed, as the only

tolerable posture I could find. To be sure I am what one calls a cup too low, but when thoroughly cleared I hope to feel fully equal to any business that may occur.

Kew, June 12, 1788.

Since writing this morning I have seen Sir George Baker, who, though he thinks everything goes on well, yet very fairly told me that quiet is essential to removing my complaint, and that I must neither go to London to-morrow nor return to Windsor. I therefore give this information to Mr. Pitt, that he may not think my not appearing to-morrow a sign of being worse. I certainly mend, but have been pretty well disciplined this day. I am sorry the Chancellor has not quite removed the trouble he has excited in the Law arrangements: it is melancholy that superior characters now and then let temper instead of reason guide them; but I trust Mr. Pitt's good temper will make him feel for weakness, and as the proposed arrangement will be effected, not feel for the manner.

G. R.

Cheltenham, Aug. 14, 1788.

I am this instant returned from seeing the most beautiful sight I ever beheld, namely, the colliery country near Stroud: above forty thousand people were assembled, and they all confess the trade is now brisker than the oldest person ever remembers.

Friday the 22nd is the first Levee, and consequently the proper time for Lord Amherst and Lord Howard to kiss hands. I hope I shall see Mr. Pitt in goo health on the evening of the 19th at Windsor.

G. R.

Kew, Oct. 20, 1788, Six o'clock P.M.

I have not been able to answer Mr. Pitt's letter sooner this day, having had a very indifferent night; but the medicine which Sir George Baker found necessary to be taken to remove the spasm has now greatly relieved me. Indeed I think myself nearer getting rid of my complaint than since the attack. If I should have a good night, I will write and desire Mr. Pitt to come here previous to the meeting of the Cabinet.

We happily got through the business last year, but then our enemy was weak indeed, and the Prussian arms succeeded beyond expectation. In the present scene it is the contrary. The King of Sweden seems to have what often go together—great want of courage, and as little good faith. The sentiments of his subjects are not known here; for Mr. Elliot's despatches are, I believe, yet to be composed, and the Danish troops have advanced much farther than any one supposed; even Bernsdorf owns it in a letter I believe drawn up for our inspection. All I mean by this is, that we must try to save Sweden from becoming a province of Russia; but I do not think this object can only be obtained by a general war, to run the risk of ruining the finances of this country, which, if our pride will allow us to be quiet for a few years, will be in a situation to hold a language which does not become the having been driven out of America.

To speak openly, it is not the being considerably weakened by illness, but the feelings that never have day or night been at ease since this country took that disgraceful step, that has made me wish what years I have still to reign not to be drawn into a war. I am now within a few days of twenty-eight years, having been not on a bed of roses. I began with a successful war; the people grew tired of that, and called out for

peace. Since that the most justifiable war any country ever waged—there in few campaigns, from being popular again peace was called for. After such woful examples, I must be a second Don Quixote if I did not wish, if possible, [to avoid] falling again into the same situation. The ardour of youth may not admire my calmness, but I think it fairer to speak out thus early than by silence be supposed to have changed my opinion, if things should bear a more warlike appearance than I now expect, and if I should then object to a general war.

I am afraid Mr. Pitt will perceive I am not quite in a situation to write at present, but I thought it better even to write as loosely as I have here than to let the box return without an answer to his letter.

G. R.

Kew, Oct. 25, 1788.

Mr. Pitt really seemed distressed at seeing my bodily stiffness yesterday, which I alone exhibited to stop further lies and any fall of the Stocks. For this kindness I shall desire Sir George Baker (who is to call here previous to my setting out for Windsor this morning) on his return to town to call in Downing Street, that if Mr. Pitt is at leisure he may know exactly how Sir George found me.

I am certainly weak and stiff, but no wonder. I am certain air and relaxation are the quickest restoratives. But that nothing may be delayed by my present situation, I authorise Mr. Pitt to acquaint the Cabinet that though I can never think whether Sweden is governed by a corrupt King or a corrupt Senate a subject worthy risking the being drawn into a war, yet that if they wish to hold any language (that is never meant to be followed up to these dreadful lengths) which may

perhaps tend to keep Sweden in its present situation, I do not object to it.

Mr. Pitt is desired by me to acknowledge the receipt of this, and to prevent all political papers being sent to me till I meet him on Wednesday at St. James's.

G. R.

Mr. Pitt to the King.

Downing Street, Oct. 25, 1788, 5½ P.M.

Mr. Pitt did not receive your Majesty's commands till after his arrival in town, having missed the messenger in his way from the country; and he has since deferred acknowledging them, thinking it would be more satisfactory to write after the Cabinet.

Wishing to trespass as little as possible on your Majesty's time, he will only say that, notwithstanding the general opinion which he ventured to submit to your Majesty on the present state of affairs in the North, there seems no absolute necessity to say anything in the despatches now to be sent which could finally commit this country to the extent of going to war in support of Sweden, and that the instructions to Mr. Ewart will be framed on this idea.

Mr. Pitt feels as he ought your Majesty's condescension and goodness in giving him an opportunity of receiving a particular account from Sir George Baker, and from his statement flatters himself that a few days will remove the effects of your Majesty's complaint.

Windsor, Nov. 3, 1788.

The King thinks it must give Mr. Pitt pleasure to receive a line from him. This will convince him the King can sign warrants without inconvenience: there-

fore he desires any that are ready may be sent, and he has no objection to receive any large number, for he shall order the messenger to return to town and shall sign them at his leisure. He attempts reading the despatches daily, but as yet without success; but he eats well, sleeps well, and is not in the least now fatigued with riding, though he cannot yet stand long, and is fatigued if he walks. Having gained so much, the rest will soon follow. Mr. Pitt is desired to be at Kew at two or three o'clock, whichever suits him best.

G. R.[1]

Kew, Feb. 23, 1789.

It is with infinite satisfaction I renew my correspondence with Mr. Pitt by acquainting him of my having seen the Prince of Wales and my second son. Care was taken that the conversation should be general and cordial: they seemed perfectly satisfied. I chose the meeting should be in the Queen's apartment, that all parties might have that caution which at the present hour could but be judicious.

I desire Mr. Pitt will confer with the Lord Chancellor, that any steps which may be necessary for raising the annual supplies, or any measures that the interests of the nation may require, should not be unnecessarily delayed; for I feel the warmest gratitude for the support and anxiety shown by the nation at large during my tedious illness, which I should ill requite if I did not wish to prevent any further delay in those public measures which it may be necessary to bring forward

[1] The letters of Oct. 25 and Nov. 3, 1788, here given entire, are the two last addressed by the King to Mr. Pitt previous to his great illness; and the correspondence was not renewed till Feb. 23, 1789.

this year, though I must decline entering into a pressure of business, and indeed for the rest of my life shall expect others to fulfil the duties of their employments, and only keep that superintending eye which can be effected without labour or fatigue.

I am anxious to see Mr. Pitt any hour that may suit him to-morrow morning, as his constant attachment to my interest and that of the public, which are inseparable, must ever place him in the most advantageous light.

G. R.

Kew, March 10, 1789.

Mr. Pitt's account of the unanimity on the proposed Address is very consonant to what I expected. I have received from Lord Sydney the emptiest answer to the one to be presented to-morrow by the Lords with White Staves, [so] that I must put down words more agreeable to my feelings on the warm and steady support I have met with during my severe and tedious illness. I trust Mr. Pitt, who is fortunate in putting his thoughts on paper, will be attentive in forming the one I am to return to the Privy Councillors on Thursday for the House of Commons. I desire Lord Courtown may be appointed to attend with it on Thursday at half-past one.

G. R.

April 12, 1789.

I am very sorry Mr. Pitt returns to a theme that has ever given me personal uneasiness. The conduct of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in the whole business of Colonel Gwynn was so perfectly inattentive, if not personally disrespectful to me, as well as contrary to every idea of what he particularly should have done considering his base conduct in 1784, that I certainly

cannot easily forget it. The vacancy now occasioned arises from removing Colonel Gwynn to the British establishment: therefore it is but reasonable that it should open for advancement in this service. The utmost I can do out of attention to Mr. Pitt, not Lord Buckingham, is not to hurry the conclusion of the business, though thoroughly determined not to yield to my deputy in Ireland.

Kew, April 16, 1789.

Mr. Pitt may rely on my delaying any appointments to the vacancies occasioned by the death of Lieutenant-General Mackay, that I may see if any arrangement can be found that may be of any use in the present state of things. I certainly meant to delay the vacancy occasioned by the removal of Lieutenant-Colonel Gwynn if Major Taylor continued to decline; but after all I had done, it was impossible I could delay it when he on better consideration accepted. To say the truth, though I am recovering, my mind is not strong enough as yet to stand little ruffles, and still more so when they relate to Lord Buckingham, who does not stand well in my mind.

I shall return to-morrow morning to Windsor; but if Mr. Pitt can call here before ten, I shall certainly gladly see him.

G. R.

Windsor, April 21, 1789.

The despatch of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on the intended resignation of the Lord Chancellor of that kingdom is a matter of too much consequence and requires too much deliberation for me to wish to keep it unnecessarily from the inspection of the Lord Chancellor and of Mr. Pitt. Besides, I must candidly con-

fess that though now without complaint, I feel more strongly the effects of my late severe and tedious illness than I had expected; though but what had been insinuated, I mean a certain lassitude and want of energy both of mind and body, which must require time, relaxation, and change of scene to restore any energy. Indeed I have, among other blessings, the advantage of having in the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Pitt two men thoroughly fit to conduct the business of their two Houses of Parliament, whose attachment to my person and to the true constitution of this realm is undoubted, and who must see the necessity to my ease as well as the real stability of the State requires their cordially acting together, and they must acknowledge the utility of early conferring together on matters of importance, that their opinions may be as it were mutually formed, and that no difficulties may arise from having separately arranged their opinions.

I see the evil of appointing an Irishman in a more forcible degree now than when England had a proper lead over Ireland, but I really have not at present a vigour of mind to discuss the question. Therefore I rest secure on their giving it all the consideration the question requires, and should hope they would also confer with Lords Camden and Stafford, after which it will be right to take the opinion of the Cabinet.

I trust this candid explanation of my sentiments to Mr. Pitt, which he should communicate to the Lord Chancellor, will be a proof to them that the public service is ever in my mind, and that as an honest man when unable to act I am desirous of deriving assistance from those who are incapable of separating interests that must and ever shall be whilst I live the same.

G. R.

Windsor, May 5, 1789.

I have just received Mr. Pitt's letter. Before I can give him any directions for fixing the allowance on William, I must see Colonel Hotham, to know the exact state of the sum that jointly regards those attendants and servants that belonged jointly to him and Edward. In truth the lassitude and dejection that has accompanied me since free from all fever prevents my being able to decide either quickly or satisfactorily to myself on any subject, and consequently makes me require time on all matters that come before me.

G. R.

Weymouth, July 30, 1789.

I perfectly approve of the mode proposed by Mr. Pitt of filling up the vacant offices, and am glad Mr. Hopkins remains at the Admiralty Board, where he is certainly a useful member. The patents of Marquises should also be prepared for Lords Salisbury and Weymouth, and the Earldom for Lord Fortescue. Might this not also be a good opportunity for indulging Lord Mount Edgcumbe with a similar promotion?

G. R.

Exeter, Aug. 27, 1789.

The warrants in favour of Dr. Willis and his son I have signed, and think this the proper time of mentioning to Mr. Pitt Mr. Thomas Willis, who certainly has the most merit in having supported the old Doctor through his difficulties with the other physicians. What seems the natural provision for him is the first vacant prebendary of Worcester. I have seen so much of him that I can answer for his principles being such as will do credit to my patronizing him. The warrant for the

other physicians seems very large, considering their conduct; but I will not enter on a subject that cannot but give me pain, for I cannot say I find myself either in strength or spirits so much recruited as I should have hoped.

G. R.

Windsor, Nov. 24, 1789.

The last evening I received an answer from the Chancellor to the letter I had wrote to him. It is so very proper, that I cannot help giving this information to Mr. Pitt, though I shall to-morrow show him the copy of my letter as well as this very handsome answer. I have not the smallest degree of doubt but that, with the mutual desire of acting agreeable to my wishes, I shall have the satisfaction of seeing you both much more cordial than at any time since you have been together in Ministry. The good of the whole must be the real object to fill both your minds; and little differences, whether occasioned by want of temper or by inadvertencies, must be forgot as unworthy of notice where such superior causes ought alone to deserve the attention of exalted minds.

G. R.

Windsor, May 17, 1790.

I have just received the two copies of the messages to the Houses of Parliament for granting the pension to Dr. Willis, and have signed them. I should imagine Lord Auckland's name would not come forward in so agreeable a manner, and therefore do not object to Mr. Pitt's offering the reversion of the Tellership of the Exchequer, become vacant by the death of Lord Hardwicke. Had Mr. Pitt proposed some means of rendering it of utility to himself, it would have been pleasing to me, as I do not feel easy at not having had

an opportunity of securing a provision for him in case of my paying that tribute to which every one is sooner or later subject.

G. R.

Windsor, Nov. 21, 1790.

I have carefully perused the correspondence, transmitted to me this morning, which has arisen on a vacant office in Scotland, and which certainly shows that the Chancellor's temper actuates him more than the goodness of his heart and of his head should permit. But an experience of thirty years convinces me that in most men the former too frequently has the advantage.

Mr. Pitt's account of the conversation that has since been held by the Chancellor with Mr. Dundas, is a proof that he is open to join cordially (which I look upon as essential to the public service), provided the old complaint on the subject of Mr. Rose could be removed. Mr. Pitt must do me the justice to recollect, that though I look on this as a very difficult point, yet that I have declared myself ever ready to contribute towards removing it, if any means can be pointed out.

My sentiments can be conveyed on the whole of this matter in a few words. The state of the House of Lords is such that Opposition have many speakers, and on the side of Government only the Lord Chancellor and Lord Hawkesbury; for the Chief Justice, though a worthy man and able lawyer, does not succeed as a debater. This shows how necessary it is to remove every cause of misunderstanding with the Chancellor, who is certainly to be gained by affection. With all his appearance of roughness, he has a feeling heart, and that alone can guide him in contradiction to his temper. Lord Stafford, if he will heartily engage to talk with the Chancellor, can certainly do much good, and should point out to him that the promise of support given to

me last Session is not acted up to, if he brings up the subject of Mr. Rose.

Though I think the House of Peers is certainly becoming too numerous, which, I fear, will be found rather inconvenient, yet it is impossible for me to object to removing Mr. Grenville to that House; as his abilities will be of material use, and his conciliating temper will in future aid in keeping matters smooth with the Chancellor.

G. R.

Dec. 12, 1790.

Having summoned a Chapter of the Garter for Wednesday, and Mr. Pitt not having been at St. James's in the course of the last week, I think it necessary by this means to remind him of my having offered him one of the vacancies of that Order. When last I mentioned it, he seemed to decline it; but perhaps the conclusion of the dispute with Spain may make him see it in a different view, namely, as a public testimonial of my approbation.

Dec. 13, 1790.

I have just received Mr. Pitt's letter declining my offer of one of the vacant Garters, but in so handsome a manner that I cannot help expressing my sensibility.

Dec. 14, 1790.

Mr. Pitt's note is just arrived, intimating a wish that I would confer the third vacant Garter on his brother Lord Chatham. I trust he is too well convinced of my sentiments to doubt that I with pleasure shall to-morrow give this public testimony of approbation, which will be understood as meant to the whole family.

Feb. 22, 1791.

The situation Mr. Ryder holds, and the part he takes in debate, seem to give him very fair pretensions for being advanced with Mr. Steele to joint Paymasters. I approve of their vacating to-morrow their seats, and desire Mr. Pitt will take the necessary steps for that purpose. G. R.

April 23, 1791.

The Duke of Leeds having delivered up the Seals of his office on Thursday, I have deposited them with Lord Grenville, so that Mr. Pitt may calmly weigh how the office of Secretary of State can best be filled. I own I think Lord Grenville has a claim to change departments if agreeable to him, and it may be easier to find one for the Home than for the Foreign Department. Having said thus much, I leave it to Mr. Pitt maturely to weigh the subject, as I do not intend to come to town during the next week, and the new Secretary cannot be sworn in till the following. G. R.

May 1, 1792.

The most daring outrage to a regular Government committed by the new Society, which yesterday published its Manifesto in several of the newspapers, could only be equalled by some of its leaders standing forth the same day to avow their similar sentiments in the House of Commons; and I cannot see any substantial difference in their being joined in debate by Mr. Fox, and his not being a member of that Society.

I received last night the enclosed paper from the Duke of Gloucester; it is drawn up by the same pen from which intelligence was sent on Saturday by Lord Sydney to Mr. Dundas. It deserves the attention

of administration; and it seems highly worthy of inquiry whether any large sum of money has been procured for France from Ireland, and whether Irishmen are connected with the French emissaries in this country.

May 15, 1792, 6·31 P.M.

Mr. Secretary Dundas has acted very properly in postponing the publishing an extraordinary Gazette, if there is the smallest doubt of the authenticity of the news he received this day; but I own I cannot willingly give up crediting the good account. If it is a forgery, it has been ably conducted.

I trust he will follow up the idea of showing Mr. Pitt that he has a real victory over the Chancellor if he keeps his temper, and that my service requires his resisting any warmth, and that however improper the language may have been, public reasons ought to prevent his taking any step; though I think Mr. Secretary Dundas ought to speak some truth to the Chancellor on this occasion, and point out how much his conduct on this occasion, if such as has been stated, is detrimental to my affairs and those of the nation. I cannot but think that the Chancellor must be ready to own that it is unbecoming in the highest degree to be wasting the present hour in personal disputes, and I trust an explanation will be made that will heal any present uneasiness.

G. R.

Aug. 6, 1792.

Having this morning received the account of the death of the Earl of Guilford, I take the first opportunity of acquainting Mr. Pitt that the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports is an office for which I will not receive any recommendations, having positively resolved to

confer it on him as a mark of that regard which his eminent services have deserved from me. I am so bent on this, that I shall seriously be offended at any attempt to decline. I have intimated these my intentions to the Earl of Chatham, Lord Grenville, and Mr. Dundas.

As to the Lieutenancy of Somersetshire, the very steady support of the Earl of Paulett, added to its having been usually entrusted to his ancestors, makes me think he can have no just competitor; and as he is in the neighbourhood of Burton, Mr. Pitt's acquainting him that it has been spontaneously conferred upon him will not be thrown away. G. R.

Windsor, Nov. 26, 1792.

Mr. Pitt's letter is just arrived, enclosing that and the postscript he received from Lord Loughborough. I cannot help stating some ideas to which they have given rise. The tenor of these papers, and of the explanatory conversation, confirm me in the belief that Lord Loughborough is disappointed the party have not permitted him to accept the situation proposed for him, and I fairly hope, therefore, that he will both in the House of Commons, and on particular cases, where his opinion as a counsellor may be required, give his genuine sentiments; but I think it shows the Duke of Portland and his advisers are much less fixed in their resolution to support than the imagination of Mr. Burke, or the more systematical judgment of Mr. Windham, gave reason to expect.

Windsor, Jan. 26, 1793.

In consequence of Mr. Pitt's note, I authorize him to direct Sir George Yonge to postpone sending the letters of service to the General Officers for a few days. I shall certainly be ready to hear what Mr. Pitt may have

to state against calling forward Lord Townshend; but I think it right to apprise [him] of the reasons that made me think it a desirable measure, his being the original father of the Militia, and as such a most popular character with that corps, and that his rank a little drew off the attention of the army from seeing another General Officer called forth (whom I think it best on paper not to name, though Mr. Pitt's penetration must understand), which appointment certainly is not popular with the army.

G. R.

Windsor, Feb. 2, 1793.

On returning from hunting I have found Mr. Pitt's note, by which I learn that Lord Beauchamp seconded the motion for an Address, which was only opposed by Lord Wycombe, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Fox, and Lord William Russell. The impression of the House seems just what could have been expected; for if the occasion ever could occur that every power for the preservation of society must stand forth in opposition to France, the necessity seems to be at the present hour. Indeed my natural sentiments are so strong for peace, that no event of less moment than the present could have made me decidedly of opinion that duty as well as interest calls on us to join against that most savage as well as unprincipled nation.

G. R.

Feb. 13, 1793.

I am rather surprised that Mr. Percy Wyndham should have supported the amendment of Mr. Fox to the Address moved by Mr. Pitt, as it had been thought that Lord Egremont's sentiments were very decided in favour of the line of conduct which has been pursued. I am glad to find Mr. Thomas Grenville has taken a line so becoming of him.

G. R.

Feb. 19, 1793.

Mr. Pitt's account of Mr. Fox's five Resolutions having fallen by the previous Question attended by a division, has given me infinite pleasure; and I doubt the Forty-Four that voted in the minority are the whole number Mr. Fox can at the present hour muster. I am glad the friends of the Duke of Portland in general joined the majority.

G. R.

May 8, 1793.

It is with infinite satisfaction I have received Mr. Pitt's note communicating the sense of the House of Commons on the renewed debate on the motion of Mr. Grey, which was so clearly shown by the division of 282 against 41; and I most devoutly pray to Heaven that this Constitution may remain unimpaired to the latest posterity, as a proof of the wisdom of the nation, and its knowledge of the superior blessings it enjoys.

G. R.

June 18, 1793.

This instant I have received Mr. Pitt's note communicating that Mr. Fox's Motion for a negotiation of peace with France on the terms of her evacuating the places she has conquered had been last night negatived by a division of 187 to 47. I cannot help observing that it seems very extraordinary that any one could advance so strange a proposition, and I trust one so contrary to the good sense of the majority of the whole nation, and such as no one but an advocate for the wicked conduct of the leaders in that unhappy country can subscribe to.

G. R.

Windsor, July 13, 1793.

I return to Mr. Pitt the warrants, having signed them. By my orders Lord Amherst has directed the ditch at Walmer Castle to be stockaded, and a picket of twenty-five men to be posted there to prevent any surprise, which will enable Mr. Pitt to go safely there whenever the public business will permit. I did not choose to mention it till I had given the necessary orders.

G. R.

Windsor, Sept. 14, 1793.

The misfortune of our situation is that we have too many objects to attend to, and our force consequently must be too small at each place. Yet it seems to me that the Hessian infantry are the only corps we can soon get at to send to Toulon.

Windsor, Nov. 17, 1793.

On the whole, as to active service, I incline much more to Flanders, as being more easily supplied from hence, and also, if enabled to move forward, being more able to advance to Paris.

May 17, 1794.

The conduct of Opposition on the present occasion seems most unwise. The attention of the public at large is awakened at the present crisis, and certainly must see with horror and disdain any set of men trying by mere chicane to clog the measures of Government. After what has passed in the House of Commons, I have not the smallest doubt but that Lords Lansdowne, Lauderdale, Stanhope, and Derby will hold a similar conduct this day in the House of Lords.

I believe there cannot be an impartial man who, when the papers are brought to light, will not see that if Government has erred, it has been in not stepping forth earlier. And yet perhaps the time that has been given was necessary to push on the faction to such overt acts that authorise the measures now pursuing.

G. R.

Windsor, July 13, 1794.

If Mr. Pitt can find that a Marquisate would be as agreeable to Lord Howe as a Garter, I will consent to it; but having with Mr. Pitt's knowledge acquainted Lord Howe with my intention of conferring the Order on him, it is impossible, unless Lord Howe chooses the former mark of favour in preference to the latter, that I can propose it. Besides, I cannot see why on the Duke of Portland's head favours are to be heaped without measure.

G. R.

Weymouth, Aug. 24, 1794.

Agreeable to what I mentioned to Mr. Pitt before I came here, I have this morning seen the Prince of Wales, who has acquainted me with his having broken off all connection with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and his desire of entering into a more creditable line of life by marrying, expressing at the same time that his wish is that my niece, the Princess of Brunswick, may be the person. Undoubtedly she is the person who naturally must be most agreeable to me. I expressed my approbation of the idea, provided his plan was to lead a life that would make him appear respectable, and consequently render the Princess happy. He assured me that he perfectly coincided with me in opinion. I then said that till Parliament assembled no arrangement could be taken except my sounding my sister, that no idea of any other marriage may be encouraged.

G. R.

Weymouth, Sept. 9, 1794.

I enclose to Mr. Pitt a copy of the letter I received yesterday from the Duke of York in consequence of the overture made to him by Mr. Windham, and am happy he sees the appointment in the same light I do of the Marquis Cornwallis, namely, of necessity obliging him to retire. I have wrote him an answer approving of his determination, as it so perfectly concurs with what I expressed in my letter to Mr. Pitt; and adding that I had not written, that he might have full liberty, should the event happen, to take the line he thought best; that I trust he will during the suspense act with the same zeal as if his command was permanent; but that in my opinion the Emperor will never agree to so novel a measure as [that] the Imperial troops should be commanded by a foreigner: that therefore I look on his remaining at the head of the troops in British pay as most probable.

G. R.

Windsor, Nov. 24, 1794.

Mr. Pitt cannot be surprised at my being very much hurt at the contents of his letter.[2] Indeed he seems to expect it, but I am certain that nothing but the thinking it his duty could have instigated him to give me so severe a blow. I am neither in a situation of mind nor from inclination inclined to enter more minutely into every part of his letter; but I am fully ready to answer the material part, namely, that though loving very much my son, and not forgetting how he saved the Republic of Holland in 1793, and that his endeavours to be of service have never abated, and that to the con-

[2] There is no draft of that letter preserved.

duct of Austria, the faithlessness of Prussia, and the cowardice of the Dutch, every failure is easily to be accounted for without laying blame on him who deserved a better fate, I shall certainly now not think it safe for him to continue in the command on the Continent, when every one seems to conspire to render his situation hazardous by either propagating unfounded complaints against him or giving credit to them.

No one will believe that I take this step but reluctantly, and the more so since no successor of note is proposed to take the command. Truly I do not see where any one is to be found that can deserve that name now the Duke of Brunswick has declined; and I am certain he will fully feel the propriety of the resolution he has taken when he finds that even a son of mine cannot withstand the torrent of abuse.

Jan. 29, 1795.

Mr. Pitt may be desirous of knowing whether anything remarkable passed with the Duke of Richmond yesterday. He certainly seemed much hurt at his intended removal, but I thought it but justice to say that Mr. Pitt had yielded to the arrangement to prevent any want of concert in the Cabinet, which the Duke himself must allow would be highly detrimental to the conduct of affairs at so critical a time as the present. His remaining on the Staff seems to give him much pleasure, and I hope will secure his support.

Feb. 6, 1795.

I received this morning Mr. Pitt's note on the success of the Austrian Loan, and am glad the business ended in the House of Commons with so little trouble.

I enclose a rough paper I have drawn up on the ex-

traordinary but serious proposal the Duke of Portland is to-morrow to lay before the Cabinet, which I mean merely for Mr. Pitt's own information.

G. R.

Feb. 6, 1795.

Having yesterday, after the Drawing Room, seen the Duke of Portland, who mentioned the receipt of letters from the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which, to my greatest astonishment, propose the total change of the principles of government which have been followed by every administration in that kingdom since the abdication of King James the Second, and consequently overturning the fabric that the wisdom of our forefathers esteemed necessary, and which the laws of this country have directed; and thus, after no longer stay than three weeks in Ireland, venturing to condemn the labours of ages, and wanting an immediate adoption of ideas which every man of property in Ireland and every friend to the Protestant Religion must feel diametrically contrary to those he has imbibed from his earliest youth.

Undoubtedly the Duke of Portland made this communication to sound my sentiments previous to the Cabinet Meeting to be held to-morrow on this weighty subject. I expressed my surprise at the idea of admitting the Roman Catholics to vote in Parliament, but chose to avoid entering further into the subject, and only heard the substance of the propositions without giving my sentiments. But the more I reflect on the subject, the more I feel the danger of the proposal, and therefore should not think myself free from blame if I did not put my thoughts on paper even in the present coarse shape, the moment being so pressing, and not sufficient time to arrange them in a more digested shape previous to the Duke of Portland's laying the subject before the Cabinet.

The above proposal is contrary to the conduct of every European Government, and I believe to that of every State on the globe. In the States of Germany, the Lutheran, Calvinist, and Roman Catholic religions are universally permitted, yet each respective State has but one Church establishment, to which the States of the country and those holding any civil employment must be conformists; Court offices and military commissions may be held also by persons of either of the other persuasions, but the number of such is very small. The Dutch provinces admit Lutherans and Roman Catholics in some subsidised regiments, but in civil employments the Calvinists are alone capable of holding them.

Ireland varies from most other countries by property residing almost entirely in the hands of the Protestants, whilst the lower classes of the people are chiefly Roman Catholics. The change proposed, therefore, must disoblige the greater number to benefit a few, the inferior orders not being of rank to gain favourably by the change. That they may also be gainers, it is proposed that an army be kept constantly in Ireland, and a kind of yeomanry, which in reality would be Roman Catholic police corps, established, which would keep the Protestant interest under awe.

It is but fair to confess that the whole of this plan is the strongest justification of the old Servants of the Crown in Ireland, for having objected to the former indulgences that have been granted, as it is now pretended these have availed nothing, unless this total change of political principle be admitted.

English Government ought well to consider before it gives any encouragement to a proposition which cannot fail sooner or later to separate the two kingdoms, or by way of establishing a similar line of conduct in this kingdom adopt measures to prevent which my family

was invited to mount the throne of this kingdom in preference to the House of Savoy.

One might suppose the authors of this scheme had not viewed the tendency or extent of the question, but were actuated alone by the peevish inclination of humiliating the old friends of English Government in Ireland, or from the desire of paying implicit obedience to the heated imagination of Mr. Burke.

Besides the discontent and changes which must be occasioned by the dereliction of all the principles that have been held as wise by our ancestors, it is impossible to foresee how far it may alienate the minds of this kingdom; for though I fear religion is but little attended to by persons of rank, and that the word *toleration,* or rather *indifference* to that sacred subject, has been too much admitted by them, yet the bulk of the nation has not been spoiled by foreign travels and manners, and still feels the blessing of having a fixed principle from whence the source of every tie to society and government must trace its origin.

I cannot conclude without expressing that the subject is beyond the decision of any Cabinet of Ministers—that, could they form an opinion in favour of such a measure, it would be highly dangerous, without previous concert with the leading men of every order in the State, to send any encouragement to the Lord Lieutenant on this subject; and if received with the same suspicion I do, I am certain it would be safer even to change the new administration in Ireland, if its continuance depends on the success of this proposal, than to prolong its existence on grounds that must sooner or later ruin one if not both kingdoms.

G. R.

Feb. 10, 1795.

I received yesterday Mr. Pitt's note of that day, but did not choose to answer it till I had written to Lord Amherst and received his answer. Nothing can be more honourable than his conduct. He has again declined the rank of Field Marshal as well as that of an Earl. I have in consequence directed Mr. Windham to notify the Duke of York as Field Marshal, and place him at the head of the British Staff, and acquainted him that my son is to stand exactly in the situation till now held by Lord Amherst. I approve of the Marquis of Cornwallis being presented to-morrow.

I do not say anything of the temporising directions to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

G. R.

Feb. 22, 1795.

I cannot lose an instant in answering the note I have just received from Mr. Pitt, expressing what he has collected from Earl Spencer and Lord Grenville of the Duke of Portland's wish in writing to Earl Fitzwilliam to offer him in my name to continue to attend Cabinet meetings on his return from Ireland. The whole conduct of the Duke of Portland in this unpleasant business is so handsome, that it is impossible not with satisfaction to gratify his feelings on this occasion. I therefore authorize Mr. Pitt to acquaint him with the suggestion having been laid before me and with my cordial consent, though I doubt much whether Earl Fitzwilliam is in a state of mind to accept it.

G. R.

Windsor, March 10, 1795.

I am much pleased with Mr. Pitt's account that both the Earl Camden and Mr. Pelham are willing to accept

the offices of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland and Secretary for that kingdom, which have been rendered more difficult by the strange conduct of Earl Fitzwilliam. I approve of Earl Camden being nominated in the Great Council Room to-morrow, and I trust he will understand that he is to reinstate all those who have been removed by his predecessor, and to support the old English interest as well as the Protestant Religion.

G. R.

May 28, 1795.

Mr. Pitt's account that the motion of Mr. Wilberforce expressing an inclination for a general pacification was got rid of by the moving the Order of the Day, which was carried by 201 to 86, is highly agreeable, particularly as the temper of the majority appeared to be strongly in favour of perseverance in the war. The recent accounts from France certainly show the propriety of the opinion; but above all, till the bad principles propagated by that unfortunate nation are given up, it cannot be safe for any civilized part of the globe to treat or trust that people.

G. R.

Kew, July 17, 1795.

By some mistake of the messenger in going to Windsor instead of bringing Mr. Pitt's letter and the instructions for the Earl of Moira here, his return is so much retarded. I think the instructions are very proper, but doubt whether the promise of cavalry in the letter that is to accompany them does not go further than perhaps can be effected.

I approve much of the resolutions printed in the papers, to which I have the pleasure of seeing my Ministers have all subscribed; but wish Mr. Pitt would

propose to them on account of the present dearness of provisions adding a resolution of having no *entremets* nor second course during the present pressure. This I am certain would meet with universal applause, and everything necessary might as well be served at one course, and without the smallest inconvenience to any one much unnecessary waste prevented.

G. R.

Windsor, Nov. 13, 1795.

I shall now, as briefly as I can, state the substance of the information I have received.

General Walmoden reports to me of the 4th inst. from Nienburg that having sent Captain Berger to Brunswick to acquaint the Duke that his troops were to return home, the Duke upon this opened his ideas fully to this officer, and wrote the General a letter, of which the annexed is a copy, as a credential of the matter Berger had to communicate.

The last declarations of M. Barthélemy that France will no longer regard any lines of demarcation she had agreed to, nor any neutrality, and that under pretence of marching through the various countries she will lay all under contributions, the Prussian and Hesse Cassel dominions not excepted, but that the other Princes shall repay Prussia and Hesse Cassel, the only two with whom she has concluded peace, the quota laid on their dominions: this shows how impossible it is for any country to treat with that unprincipled nation.

The Duke's ideas tend to his being authorised by England to go to Berlin, and try to bring back the King of Prussia on this strange declaration and the change of appearance by the Austrian successes (which he is aware will raise the jealousy of Prussia), and thus attempt to get an army formed to secure the flank of the Austrians,

which he is willing to command, with a view of preventing the French from overrunning Germany, not on any plan of offensive but defensive operations.

Mr. Pitt to the King.

Downing Street, Nov. 14, 1795.

Mr. Pitt was honoured yesterday with your Majesty's commands, accompanying the copy of the letter from the Duke of Brunswick, and took the first opportunity of mentioning the interesting subject to which it relates to your Majesty's confidential servants at their meeting this morning.

Mr. Dundas not having then received the letter to H.R.H. the Duke of York, which has since come to his hands, your Majesty's servants did not feel themselves enabled fully to discuss so important a subject, and the consideration of it will be resumed with as little delay as possible. In the mean time Mr. Pitt cannot help submitting to your Majesty the strong apprehension which he entertains that the immense additional expense which would probably be incurred by again collecting and maintaining an army to defend the line of demarcation, added to the impossibility of depending on any concert in which Prussia is to bear a material part, will hardly admit of any encouragement being given to the Duke of Brunswick's proposal.

Dec. 4, 1795.

It is with much satisfaction I have learnt from Mr. Pitt's note that the Bill for preventing seditious assemblies has been passed this morning on a division of 266 to 51, and that Mr. Abbot, who spoke for the first time, delivered his sentiments with great ability and effect.

G. R.

Jan. 27, 1796.

It is but natural that I must feel much interested that every measure of magnitude should be well weighed previous to any decision being adopted. I have therefore put on paper the objections that seem to me most conclusive against any step being taken to open a negotiation of peace with France, of which I have taken a copy, which I desire to deposit in the hands of Mr. Pitt.

G. R.

Mr. Pitt to the King.

Downing Street, Jan. 30, 1796.

Mr. Pitt was honoured with the commands which your Majesty had the condescension and goodness to send him on Wednesday last. The present circumstances had necessarily led to repeated consideration among your Majesty's servants on the line proper to be pursued with respect to negotiation. The result of the best opinion they can form on the subject is so fully stated in the draft of a despatch to Sir Morton Eden, which will be submitted to your Majesty by Lord Grenville, that Mr. Pitt does not feel himself obliged to trouble your Majesty with much additional observation.

The return of Admiral Christian with a large part of the convoy to Spithead (of which accounts were received this morning), and the advanced season, make it now impossible that operations on a large scale can be prosecuted with full effect (though they may still be successfully begun) till the close of the year; and it cannot be expected that Parliament or the country will wait to so distant a period for *some* pacific explanation. It seems equally clear that if Government takes in time steps to remove the possibility of cavil on its real desire

to make peace in conjunction with your Majesty's Allies, on suitable terms whenever they can be obtained, that this will ensure the continuance of a zealous support in and out of Parliament.

On the other hand if Government delay taking steps themselves so late as to be obliged at last to take them in consequence of any declaration of the sense of Parliament, all hope of good terms would be at an end. In the first case, the issue of the war (though far from equal to all that might at some periods have been hoped) would still be honourable and probably advantageous; in the other case, it can hardly be expected to be otherwise than the reverse.

Besides this, it is to be considered that if on explanation France should avow the inadmissible and extravagant pretensions contained in the papers lately circulated by the French Agents, nothing would contribute more to a cheerful and vigorous support of the war; and in the interval any Parliamentary difficulties will be avoided, and the undisturbed management of the negotiation in its future progress be secured to Government, by their being enabled to hold a language which must silence all opposition.

Jan. 31, 1796.

I should not have felt easy had I not fully stated my sentiments against any step from hence being taken for applying to France for peace; and it is not the return of the force sent to the West Indies that can in the least alter my opinions as to the propriety of holding out till France takes some avowed step for attempting to treat; but I do not in the least mean by this to make any obstinate resistance to the measure proposed, though I own I cannot feel the utility of it. My mind is not of a nature to be guided by the obtaining a little ap-

plause or staving off some abuse; rectitude of conduct is my sole aim. I trust the rulers in France will reject any proposition from hence short of a total giving up any advantage we may have gained, and therefore that the measure proposed will meet with a refusal.

G. R.

Kew, Oct. 5, 1796.

Mr. Pitt's account of the manner with which Lord Morpeth and Sir William Lowther conducted themselves in moving the Address this day, and the general impression of the House, is as could be wished. I cannot help expressing that I was better pleased with the opinion held yesterday by Lord Grenville that no man of note ought to be sent to France, but some mere official agent, than with his thought this day of offering the commission to Lord Malmesbury, who having been advanced to a seat in the House of Peers, will probably not feel flattered with the proposal.

G. R.

END OF VOL. II.

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ERRATA.

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VOL. I.

P. 333, line 7, *for* " horse," *read* " horses."

P. 358, line 28, *for* " Elliott," *read* " Elliot."

P. 403, note, *for* " Dairy," *read* " Diary."

VOL. II.

P. 19, last line, *for* " find," *read* " trust."

P. 130, line 4, *for* " iffipression," *read* " impression."

P. 280, line 6, *dele* comma after " himself."


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